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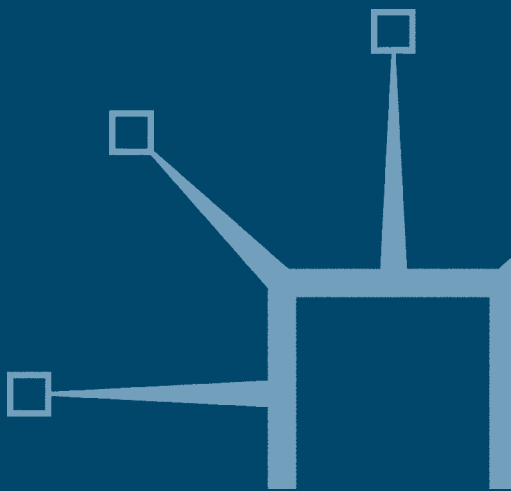
Irish Rebellion

Protestant Polemic, 1798–1900

Stuart Andrews



Irish Rebellion

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Irish Rebellion

Protestant Polemic, 1798–1900

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To the memory of James Morrison, Ulsterman

The ungenerous policy of England filled Ireland with disaffection, and her alarmed Ministers of torture were let loose to quell, by means that would have disgraced an Alva, the commotions of her own raising.
***Annual Review* 1803**

The vigorous policy of England prevented the destruction of the liberty of Ireland and preserved that country from the worst of all tyrannies, that of Jacobins.
***Antijacobin Review* 1804**

It was not until an advanced stage of the American revolt had attracted the attention of enlightened Europe to the first principles of civil liberty, that Ireland began steadily to reflect on her own deprivations.
Sir Jonah Barrington
***Historic memoirs of Ireland* 1833**

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Preface

This study focuses on rival historical interpretations of the 1798 Rebellion, and on the factual distortions promoted by the Protestant Establishment and its partisan literary reviews. The work completes a trilogy centred on counter-revolutionary polemic in the decades following the American and French revolutions. The focus is less on events themselves than on the rhetoric that colours perceptions of those events.

Apologists for the Episcopalian Protestant Ascendancy – 'Protestants' in Irish parlance of the day – sought to represent 1798 as a continuation of the long-running conflict between Catholic and Protestant. Even contemporaries saw this as too simplistic, since it ignored Presbyterian leadership of the Rebellion, while improbably bracketing Catholics and Presbyterians together as part of an alleged Europe-wide Jacobin conspiracy. An introductory chapter surveying the work of modern scholars, writing at or around the bicentenary, provides a yardstick against which to measure the more extreme examples of Ascendancy myth-making.

The arch myth-maker was Sir Richard Musgrave, who died in 1818. Himself a member of the Protestant Ascendancy, his *Irish Rebellions* was published in 1801, and was recognized at the time as stridently partisan. But less noticed is the systematic way in which the *Antijacobin Review* and the *British Critic* promoted Musgrave's views, and gave generous space to his anonymous demolition of his challengers. This continuing journalistic war of attrition helped to fix the Musgrave version on generations of the British reading public. Meanwhile a re-invigorated Papacy, the return of the Jesuits, the increasingly self-confident Irish Catholic hierarchy, and the impact of O'Connell's Emancipation campaign, all seemed to confirm Musgrave's thesis.

The key years are the first half-century ending in 1848, but Musgrave was re-echoed whenever current events re-ignited the debate on 1798. So this analysis is carried to 1900 – the centenary of the Act of Union – though later chapters are necessarily more impressionistic. Irish issues brought down British ministries all too frequently. Ignoring Pitt's resignation in 1801, ostensibly over Catholic Emancipation, there remain the ten casualties of: Grenville (1807), Grey (1833), Peel (1835), Melbourne (1841), Peel (1846), Disraeli (1868), Gladstone (1874),

Salisbury (1885), Gladstone (1886) and Gladstone (1894). Even Britain's Special Branch began in 1883 as the Special Irish Branch. The first centenary of 1798 fell in the year between the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the outbreak of the South African War. That makes it all the more surprising that in 1900, at the height of the war and nine months before her death, Queen Victoria paid a state visit to Ireland. That same year a new two-volume history took what was essentially a Musgrave line, and a century later Sir Richard still receives scholarly support.

My reliance on other historians, whatever their sympathies, is made clear in the text. Among modern scholars to whom I owe a personal debt is Kevin Whelan, who has been most generous with his time, and in whose final chapter of *The Tree of Liberty* my own study is rooted. I am grateful for his advice at a critical moment, and for his comments on the draft of my introductory chapter. Less directly, Dr Whelan's reminder about Morley's rehabilitation of Burke was supplemented by Professor Derek Beales, who drew my attention to several Burkean references. I must thank John Kirwan for guidance on Dublin libraries, Edward Lucas for access to his unpublished dissertation on William Drennan, and Sandy Bannister for proof-reading my typescript. And I gladly reiterate my gratitude to the staff of Bristol Reference Library for their patience and expertise, which (together with my wife's forbearance) have sustained me through many years of writing and research.

Stuart Andrews

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1
1798: Bicentennial Verdict

In June 1798, Lord Cornwallis, newly appointed Viceroy of Ireland, commented to the Duke of Portland on 'the folly which has been so prevalent in this question of substituting the word Catholicism, instead of Jacobinism, as the foundation of the present rebellion'.[1] London's *Antijacobin Review*, which made its first appearance the following month, managed to turn even Catholics into Jacobins, by applying the 'Jacobin' label to all who it thought posed a threat to the political and religious Establishment – on either side of the Irish Sea.[2] Less polemically, modern historians have tried to decide how far, and how early, the Presbyterian-led United Irishmen adopted French republican principles – as opposed to republican rhetoric – and how far the largely Catholic Defenders had been politicized, however crudely, by Paine's *Rights of Man*.

Sir Richard Musgrave famously dedicated his *Memoirs of the Different Rebellions in Ireland* (1801) to Cornwallis, from whom he received a tart vice-regal snub.[3] Yet in the 1990s David Dickson, introducing the first printing of Musgrave's controversial work since the Dublin edition of 1802, pointed to 'the congruence of some of his arguments with modern reinterpretations'. Specifically, Dickson notes that Musgrave's emphasis on the early growth and sophistication of Defenderism, and his essentially political account of the rebellion's general background 'accord well with the drift of modern research'. But Dickson also points to the imbalance in Musgrave's *Rebellions*, not only because of the 'blind prejudice and savage party spirit' noted by the *Dictionary of National Biography*, but because only three per cent of the main narrative is devoted to Antrim and Down. Dickson does not think this can have been due to inaccessibility of information, but sees it as highlighting the 'essentially sectarian orientation' of Musgrave's account. Thus 'economic distress, Painite popular politicization, and Presbyterian republicanism

either played no part or were of such minor significance that they had no bearing on the direction of the grand narrative. While conceding Musgrave's initial success, Dickson concludes that 'in the longer run the *Memoirs*' partisan rhetoric was consigned to the shadows.'[4] Some of the following chapters seek to qualify that dismissive verdict. I suggest that the prominence given by the pro-Establishment monthlies to Musgrave's portrayal of 1798 as a Catholic rebellion helped to delay Catholic Emancipation, and to colour public attitudes to British policy in Ireland throughout the nineteenth century, if not beyond.

One effect of Musgrave's portrayal of 1798 as a Catholic rebellion was to ignore the confessional motivation of Presbyterians in both Dublin and Belfast. And in spite of much recent focus on the Presbyterian north, the religious context has too rarely been given fair treatment. Disentangling theological and purely political threads within Irish Presbyterianism is admittedly a daunting undertaking.[5] In church polity, the Presbyterians of Ireland stood mid-way between the more rigidly disciplined pyramidal structure of the Scottish Kirk and the independence of English Presbyterians, who survived the Restoration as individual congregations untrammelled by presbyteries and synods. In England of the 1780s and 1790s, explicit hostility to a church establishment was fuelled by the drift into various forms of Unitarianism by Presbyterian and Baptist congregations, accompanied by notable Anglican tutors and graduates of Cambridge University.[6] The Irish Presbyterian Church was not riven by Unitarianism until the 1820s, but in the eighteenth century it was divided on the question of subscription – not (as at Cambridge) to the 39 Articles, but to the 1642 Westminster Confession. The Irish 'non-subscribers' or 'New Light' Presbyterians were also suspect on doctrinal grounds, though they objected to the Calvinist theology of predestination, rather than to Trinitarian doctrines.[7] The political implications of their stance is best expressed by William Drennan, writing in 1806:

> They are in general protestant dissenters, and their *reformed presbyterianism* is supported by two pillars – the inalienable right of private judgment, and an inflexible resistance to spiritual authority in matters of religion between God and man. The unity of the church is, with them, not nearly a matter of such moment as a convinced understanding and a satisfied conscience.[8]

Almost a century before, James Kirkpatrick had noted that presbyterianism 'lays such foundations for a liberty of the individual in church

matters, that it naturally creates in the people an aversion from all tyranny and oppression in the state also.'[9] Ian McBride, whose *Scripture Politics* was published in the bicentennial year, puts the point the other way round: 'The rhetoric of Presbyterian radicalism was suffused with theological learning, biblical imagery and religious conviction.'[10] Numerically the Presbyterians were at least as significant as the members of the Established Church – 'Protestants' in Irish parlance – while in the north-east they were a majority of the population. And it was the un-Kirk-like leniency of the General Synod of Ulster that (from 1725) grouped together non-subscribing Presbyterian ministers in the Presbytery of Antrim.

The English Dissenters' campaign against the Anglican Establishment did not go unnoticed in Ireland. Priestley and Furneaux were authors read by Irish Presbyterians, and we know that the Ulster Volunteer Reform Convention of 1783 corresponded with those fellow 'Rational Christians' Richard Price, John Cartwright and John Jebb.[11] A notable 'New Light' minister, John Cameron, had a link with Priestley through his son, William Cameron, who was a member of Priestley's Birmingham congregation. In 1768, when Moderator of the Reformed Presbyterian Synod, Cameron senior had published *The Messiah; an Epic in nine books*, which a hostile biographer observed was 'expressed in the poetical prose form that the poems of Ossian have made famous'.[12] And in the following year appeared his anonymous *Catholic Christian; or True Religion sought and found by Theophilus Philander*.[13] When his orthodoxy was challenged by Benjamin McDowell, minister of Ballykelly, Cameron responded in Socratic-dialogue form, explicitly repudiating man-made creeds. If orthodoxy is the holding of religious opinions 'true and right in themselves, and perfectly agreeable to Scripture', then the test of a person's orthodoxy can only be 'the approbation of an infallible judge'.[14] Well might Cameron's Victorian commentator remark that 'traces of Cameron's influence are discernible in some of Priestley's published works.'[15]

The names of Priestley and Price, together with Cartwright (fellow pamphleteer against American taxation) and Jebb (tutor of Archibald Hamilton Rowan, as United Irishmen would recall in 1794), signal the importance of the American War to Dissenters in Ireland as well as in England. Much English rhetoric of the 1790s had its roots in America rather than in France. Priestley's pamphlet in support of the American rebels, published nearly two years before Paine's *Common Sense*, was entitled *Address to Protestant Dissenters of all Denominations*. And in his three pamphlets of 1776, 1777 and 1785, the Arian minister Richard

Price had more to say about America and the new United States, than he did about the French Revolution in the three concluding pages of his notorious London Revolution Society sermon of 1789. Priestley and his fellow Dissenting ministers saw events in America as a reassertion of the Puritan Revolution of the 1640s, embodied in the defining documents of 1688–89, but emasculated in the decades since Queen Anne's accession.[16] The support of English 'Rational Christians' for the emerging American republic owed as much to their Puritan antecedents as to their welcome for the arrival of Enlightenment ideals in the New World. Unlike Edmund Burke, they regarded the French constitution of 1791 as the transfer of American political principles to Europe. And the U.S. Constitution, with its Bill of Rights, and its repudiation of religious establishments, was ratified in the same year as its French counterpart.[17]

Marianne Elliott, whose major focus in her studies of the revolutionary discourse is on the inter-action between the United Irishmen and France, nevertheless notes that Wolfe Tone published the United States Constitution in the *Northern Star*. Tone highlighted: the debarring of office-holders from election to Congress, the subjection of the executive to Congressional control, the grant of the franchise to property-holders other than landowners, and the four freedoms of speech, assembly, petitioning and religion.[18] The American War itself had a more immediate impact on Ireland in the creation of the Volunteers, who in 1782 extracted from Britain a measure of independence both for Irish trade and for the Dublin Parliament.

Drennan would later write of 'the political liberty of our fellow-subjects in America, possessed of the same rights as ourselves, with this only difference, that they were across an ocean, and we were across a channel'.[19] George III's ministers could hardly be expected to relish the comparison, and troops were more easily shipped across St George's Channel than across the Atlantic. David Doyle, writing 200 years after the British surrender at Yorktown, records that when Congress came to choose insignia for the newly independent United States, it at first considered a composite coat of arms with a 'European' element that would have included an Irish emblem.[20] Doyle recalls the insistence of Francis Hutcheson, Dublin associate of Drennan's father, on the absurdity of 'a large society…remaining subject to the direction and government of a distant body of men'.[21] Doyle wrote of the English radicals: 'Even before the French Revolution they saw that the American constitutions were antecedent acts of popular sovereignty which limited government', whereas the post-1688 English constitution retained 'the actual

organs of government as they were: unrepresentative, hereditary, property-based.'[22] Doyle's main interest is Irish emigration to America, and its contrasting patterns of Catholic and Presbyterian settlement. Yet his analysis of America's impact on Ireland deserves to be considered as part of the debate on 1798. Not only was the rhetoric of Irish reformers of the 1780s 'full of appeals to American precedent, even where inappropriate', but the actual course of the war dictated the readiness of the British government to give way. 'Just as the news of Saratoga had first inclined London to make concessions to Ireland,' Doyle observes, 'so Cornwallis's defeat at Yorktown, the fall of Lord North and the accession to power of the opposition groups which had championed Ireland…created an ideal opportunity for the Irish movement.' By 1782, 'spokesmen on every side took America's toleration for Catholics as a precedent, a touchstone, or a warning that it must be conceded in Ireland'.[23] And if later 'New Light' support for concessions to Irish Catholics can easily be made to seem cynical, we can recall that London's Standing Committee of Protestant Dissenters would agree to the granting of further relief to English Catholics – only ten years after the Gordon Riots.[24]

The end of the American War removed the Volunteers' *raison d' être*. Doyle thinks the disintegration of the Volunteers 'should caution those who might see them primarily as national reformers rather than as primarily a popular wartime mobilization'.[25] And his verdict on the United Irishmen is uncompromisingly dismissive: 'United Irish ideology was in its own time a counsel of despair: a recognition that the middle class rationality encouraged by the American Revolution could find no other outlet in a segmented and impassioned island than in the somewhat spurious unanimity of an Irish Jacobinism.'[26] Elliott's conclusion, though more sympathetic, is not dissimilar:

> The United Irish leaders were misfits among the revolutionaries of the 1790s. The American system of democracy rather than the French remained their ideal model. To most, revolution and bloodshed were distasteful; a French invasion would be the means of minimizing both, and an interim national government formed by the leaders would in turn control the activities of the invasion force.[27]

It had been a French fleet that forced the British army to surrender at Yorktown.

Both Doyle and Elliott published their judgements in the early 1980s. Of those historians writing closer to the bicentenary, McBride

has no doubt that 'Presbyterian radicalism began not with the French Revolution, as historians have sometimes assumed, but with its American predecessor.' His aim in emphasizing transatlantic connections is 'to convey something of the depth of the rapid politicization which took place as Anglo-Irish ties were dissolved'.[28] Besides listing relevant names in what he calls 'wider Dissenting radicalism', McBride argues that *Rights of Man* no less than *Common Sense* was informed by Paine's American experience'.[29] McBride follows Jonathan Clark (and incidentally Lafayette) in emphasizing the denominational thread in the American Revolution and in underlining the Presbyterian anxieties arising from the Quebec Act. As for proposals to establish Anglican bishops in the colonies, the Rev. Thomas Clark, who had emigrated to Pennsylvania from Co. Monaghan, regarded episcopal dress as tainted: 'The blood of many Christians is on the skirts of the surplices'.[30]

McBride cites sermons by 'New Light' ministers condemning the American War. William Campbell, Moderator of the Synod of Antrim in 1773, called the offering of prayers for British military success 'a solemn mockery of things divine, approaching perhaps to blasphemy'. Similarly William Steel Dickson preached two sermons to his Ballyhalbert congregation on the 'Advantages of National repentance' (13 December 1776) and on 'the ruinous effects of Civil War' (27 February 1778).[31] The surrender of Burgoyne at Saratoga, and the consequent entry of France and Spain into the war, marked a turning-point. Drennan, still in his early twenties and a medical student at Edinburgh, told his sister that 'future historians will date the fall of the British Empire from the 16th October '77'.[32] Some six months later his sister reported on the Volunteer companies: 'Their regimentals are blue, white waistcoat and breeches, and blue, gold-laced hats.' It sounds remarkably like the uniform of George Washington's continental army – on which Lafayette would model the uniforms of the Paris National Guard.[33] Earlier in 1778 Drennan had given his chilling description of how he had celebrated a Fast Day, which had ended in 'unanimously wishing that all the tyrants of Europe had one neck, that neck laid on the block and one of us appointed executioner'.[34]

Half a century before the 1798 bicentenary, R. B. McDowell, in his seminal *Irish Public Opinion 1750–1800*, provided a list of pro-American toasts at the quarterly dinners of the eighteenth-century Society of Free Citizens of Dublin. Extracted from the *Hibernian Journal* between 17 July 1775 and 14 January 1778, they include: 'Our fellow subjects in America now suffering persecution for attempting to assert their rights and liberties' and 'May every mercenary be obliged to pile his arms and

march to the tune of Yankee Doodle.[35] The latter toast was a prophetic foreshadowing of the British surrender at Yorktown. McDowell also highlights an Irish press report of a successful skirmish by General Clinton, lamenting that 'so many men should fall ineffectual victim to the implacable obstinacy and vindictive malice of a ministry to whose destructive measures we owe all the calamities we now suffer'.[36] Dublin's *Freeman's Journal* published reports on American affairs, while David Dickson cites the 'exceptional coverage' of American news in the *Londonderry Journal* and the *Belfast Newsletter*.[37] And the *Hibernian Journal*, reporting the Dublin parliamentary debates, carried the warning that the English 'understand most perfectly that the cause of America is yours'.[38] Among titles published in Ireland after the American War were: *The Constitutions of the several independent States of America* (Dublin, 1783) and Price's *Observations on the American Revolution* (Dublin, 1785).[39] In the mid-1780s, a Dublin Volunteer company, pledging themselves to restore the constitution to its original purity, declared their wish for a perpetual bond between the Irish Volunteers and 'our glorious brethren the volunteer citizens of America'.[40] Even Lord Charlemont observed that the Americans were 'termed rebels for their heroic struggle in vindication of their natural rights'.[41] When, in 1794, Priestley sought asylum in America, the United Irishmen wished him well: 'Yes the volunteers of Ireland still live; they live across the Atlantic. Let this idea animate us in our sufferings, and may the pure principles and genuine lustre of the British constitution, reflected from *their coasts*, penetrate into *our cells* and *our dungeons*.'[42] The American rhetoric used by both Volunteers and United Irishmen is relevant to any discussion of continuities between the 1780s and 1790s.

The reference to 'hidden roots' in the sub-title of A. T. Q. Stewart's 1993 study of the *United Irishmen*, advertises his own conclusions on continuity. Emphasizing the role of the Volunteer companies as vehicles of political debate, Stewart notices that, of the movement's political aims – the right to trade freely with the colonies, an independent Irish parliament, parliamentary reform and extension of the franchise to Catholics – half had been obtained (at least in name) within six years of the Volunteers being established.[43] By the time Volunteer delegates assembled at their first non-military convention in Dungannon, to consider how to 'root corruption and court influence out of the legislative body', news of the Yorktown surrender had reached Ireland.[44] Charlemont did not attend the opening session of the convention on 15 February 1782, when 250 delegates from 143

Ulster Volunteer regiments marched into Dungannon parish church. But he gave unqualified support to the resolutions – including the famous one calling for Catholic emancipation.[45] Charlemont would take a different line in 1790, but in May 1784 the Belfast Volunteer companies opened their ranks to men of all religious persuasions, 'firmly convinced that a general union of *all* the inhabitants of Ireland is necessary to the freedom and prosperity of this kingdom'. And when, on 30 May, the Belfast companies attended Mass in the city's first Catholic church, a collection of £84 was taken up towards the cost of the new building.[46] The second Dungannon convention, held in the Presbyterian church in September 1783, while calling for electoral reform, elected Charlemont, notable borough-owner, as General of the Ulster Volunteers. But when the 500 representatives from 276 Ulster Volunteer corps proposed a National Convention in Dublin, leadership passed to the flamboyant Earl of Bristol, Bishop of Derry. Charlemont, like Grattan, doubted whether the Volunteers should usurp the powers of Parliament.[47]

Henry Flood, Lecky's 'representative and inspirer of the Volunteer Convention of 1783', had relied on Grattan and the moderate reformers among Irish MPs when, dressed in Volunteer uniform, he personally presented the Convention's parliamentary reform bill to the assembled Dublin House of Commons. He had also relied on the passive presence of Volunteer numbers in Dublin as an irrefutable expression of public opinion. When the Castle called his bluff, the Volunteers dissolved their convention, laid down their arms and left the implementation of reforms to the Protestant Ascendancy.[48] Even before Flood's humiliation, Drennan had written: 'All the powers of oratory will not gain the people one additional note in the next session of parliament, unless during the present prorogation, you occasionally display before the spies of the court, some rhetorical flourishes of the firelock, or some pathetic touches from a park of artillery.'[49]

Drennan's dismay at the collapse of the Volunteers was made formidably explicit in *Letters of Orellana*, first published in the *Belfast Newsletter*. His literary assault was provoked by the failure of seven counties to send delegates to a second National Convention held in Dublin in October 1784.[50] Stewart gives extracts from the *Letters*, citing Drennan's scornful response to Bruce's proposed formation of a Whig Reform Club: 'Ten or twelve conspirators for constitutional freedom would do more in a day than they would do in ten.' Drennan had earlier told Bruce of his preference for 'the institution of a society as secret as the Freemasons, whose object might be by every practicable

means to put into execution plans for the complete liberation of the country'.[51] *Letters of Orellana* share that same blend, of Lockean natural-rights language with attacks on ecclesiastical establishments, so characteristic of the pamphlets and sermons of Price and Priestley. Thus 'constitutional rights are those rights respecting life, liberty and property without which we cannot be free; and an assemblage of those rights I call a free *constitution*'. But Drennan also insists on the need to disentangle religion from politics: 'The alliance between church and state has preserved and sanctified the abuses of both; and the same dogmatical spirit which established for all future generations a certain system of *religious* belief, has transferred to our *civil* constitution an equal authority over the minds of men.'[52] The assumptions of both the Enlightenment and 'New Light' Presbyterianism are encapsulated in Drennan's minimalist assertion: 'On two commands hang all the law and the prophets: and the principles of policy are not perhaps more numerous or more complex than those of religion.' The immediate constitutional object is reform, not subversion; but if the Irish House of Commons rejects reform, 'it is the business of the people who first formed that house to deliberate on the means of reforming it'. If that should lead to a national convention, then that assembly should be seen 'as a constitutional, and at the same time peaceable means' of effectively expressing 'the *conjunct will* of a royal people – whose cause is good; whose numbers are great; and whose union must prove irresistible'.[53]

For Drennan in *Letters of Orellana*, 'union' is as important as 'numbers'. The fifth letter calls on 'Churchmen, Presbyterians and Catholics to embrace each other in the mild spirit of Christianity', and to unite as 'a sacred compact in the cause of your sinking country. For you are all IRISHMEN – you are nurtured by the same maternal earth'.[54] Taken together the *Letters of Orellana* and the 'constitutional conspiracy' commended in his letters to Bruce, represent a revolutionary programme. As Stewart remarks: 'Here in 1784 and 1785 Drennan outlines his scheme for a secret inner circle of dedicated radical reformers, within the Volunteer movement and directing its policies, six years before the United Irish Society.'[55] Drennan's proposals of the mid-1780s are certainly echoed in the famous letter to his brother-in-law in 1791, proposing a society 'having much of the secrecy and somewhat of the ceremony of Freemasonry'. It would constitute a 'benevolent conspiracy' with 'the Rights of Man and the Greatest Happiness of the Greatest Number its end', and with 'Real Independence to Ireland, and republicanism its particular purpose.'[56]

At the level of rhetoric, there are clearly continuities between the Volunteers and the United Irishmen – called by Nancy Curtin 'the radical wing of the Volunteers'. In the early years of the new movement, she sees the United Irishmen operating as 'an open, constitutional society, its function largely propagandist – to disseminate political information, and whenever possible to co-ordinate the activities of other like-minded groups'.[57] Curtin suggests that the continuities extend beyond rhetoric. The government's suppression of the Volunteers in 1793 had forestalled the United Irish attempt to revitalize the Volunteer organization. She thinks that the United Irishmen's 'contradictory attempt to construct a democratic and representative revolutionary organization' can be explained by their tendency to 'regard the citizen as soldier, the soldier as citizen'.[58] The United States Bill of Rights (published in the *Northern Star* in September 1792), recognizing the need for 'a well-regulated militia', guaranteed that 'the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.'[59] Drennan would later claim that the disturbances in Co. Armagh in the mid-1790s arose from 'an instinctive desire for arms'.[60] And it was to find arms that Lafayette's National Guard had stormed the Bastille.

Events in Paris had initially left their mark at a symbolic and rhetorical level. Archibald Hamilton Rowan encouraged the formation of a 'National Guard' with the cap-of-liberty insignia so deplored by Lord Charlemont. And as early as November 1789, the Theatre Royal in Dublin staged a performance of *Gallic Freedom or the Destruction of the Bastille*.[61] Curtin is inclined to underestimate the religious motivation of the mainly Presbyterian United Irishmen, but McBride more than redresses the balance. While Curtin claims that 'it was the common enemy, not common sympathy that brought Catholic and radical protesters, peasants and merchants together in the 1790s', McBride points to news of the introduction of religious toleration in the predominantly Catholic powers of Europe. He thinks Price's 1789 sermon, with its famous peroration, shows 'how closely civil and religious liberty were intertwined in the Dissenting mind'. Elsewhere McBride quotes Drennan's remark to Bruce that, 'as Protestants are much more enlightened in regard to civil and religious liberty', their co-operation with Catholics will ensure that 'ignorance will become knowledge, bigotry liberality, and civil freedom must necessarily terminate in the pure principles of Protestantism.'[62] Elliott, while recognizing the sincerity of the United Irish ideal of creating 'the common bond of Irishman in the place of the denominations of Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter', thinks the outbreak of war against France in 1793 irreparably damaged

the Catholic-Protestant alliance, by causing 'underlying tensions to explode'.[63]

A month before war was declared, Drennan wrote to Samuel McTier: 'The cry of revolution and republicanism is raised against us. No King etc. Take great care to obviate this. Our present pursuits ought to terminate in an equal and impartial representation of the people, and let posterity go on to republicanism if they chose.' But in the same letter he was urging the immediate execution of Louis XVI to avoid a massacre – 'if not, it will be terrible work'.[64] Drennan saw only too clearly the risks that war would bring to his benevolent conspiracy: 'Every person concerned in the cotton manufacture, it is said, will suffer next to ruin, and all this, the failures here, the failures in England, the retreat of Dumouriez, and, for aught I know, the partition of Poland will be attributed to the United Irishmen'.[65] Elliott is right to observe that 'the continuing support of the United Irishmen for the French became the main basis for attacks on their constitutionalism.'[66] But, focusing as she does on the connections of Tone and the United Irishmen with France, it is understandable that she tends to play down the continuities between the 1780s and early 1790s.[67]

It is undeniable that, by the mid-1790s, United Irishmen were organizing for armed rebellion. Yet in Ireland, as in England, the war against France was at first criticized on moral grounds. Drennan's reference to the partition of Poland is a reminder that Britain's allies were the partitioning powers – the three most despotic governments in Europe. The *Northern Star*'s reaction to the September massacres of 1792 – before Britain had officially entered the war – is revealing. Deciding that it could not excuse murder without trial, however incensed the Paris mob might have been by the Brunswick manifesto, the newspaper nevertheless argues that the perpetrators were less culpable than the Birmingham rioters of 1791 who had destroyed Priestley's home, meeting-house, laboratory and library: 'The object of one mob was to destroy the enemies of their country, the other directed its vengeance against religion and the friends of mankind.'[68] Curtin cites the *Northern Star*'s reports of the discussions of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen: 'Whatever pretexts may be held out, the real objects of the war against France appear to this society to be not merely to punish crimes, but to persecute principles.' It would be a war 'entered into by tyrants and abettors of tyranny, when France had committed no crime unless the emancipation of 24 million men be one'.[69] The eventual arrest of its proprietor, Samuel Neilson, in September 1796, did not soften the *Northern Star*'s anti-war stance. It

published Arthur O'Connor's *Address to the electors of the county of Antrim* in which he characterized the war as 'undertaken for the destruction of liberty abroad and for the preservation of corruption at home'.[70]

Elliott comments that the war, 'by effectively terminating the movement for reform and branding criticism of the authorities as semi-treasonable, erased the moderate element in the United Irish Society'. She adds: 'The significance of the events of 1793–95 was not that they created widespread republicanism, but that they temporarily provided existing discontent with a republican and pro-French leadership.' Elliott thinks that surviving documentary evidence supports Thomas Addis Emmet's claim that it was 'from the base of society' that the idea of a secret society seeking French help originated, and worked its way up into the higher echelons under the impact of the Jackson trial'. The trial itself, Elliott nevertheless argues, attracted little public attention.[71] The notion that 'Jacobinism' rose from the 'base of society' is illuminated by Curtin's comments on the self-styled 'Irish Jacobins' of Belfast. Their inaugural address of December 1792 adopted resolutions closely resembling those of the United Irishmen, but Curtin considers them unabashed republicans who call for a national convention to include delegates from England and Scotland in order to establish a popular constitution. The chairman of the Irish Jacobins was Rowley Osborne, brother of the Belfast United Irishman William Osborne; while its secretary, Samuel Kennedy, was chief compositor of the *Northern Star*.[72] Curtin notes that in 1794, just as Drennan is relinquishing active leadership, his earlier insistence on a test, secrecy and the ceremonial of Freemasonry takes hold in the United Irish organization.[73] Drennan refused to take the amended oath adopted in 1795, with the words 'in parliament' omitted. As MacNeven explained: 'The test embraced both the republican and the reformer, and left it to future circumstances to decide to which the common strength should be directed.'[74]

In charting the rapid expansion of the United Irish movement – a process that began before the fiasco of the Fitzwilliam appointment – Curtin considers the increasing sectarianism implied by the Defenders: 'Whereas many Presbyterian radicals sought the abolition of any state religion in Ireland, Defenders seemed to espouse the replacement of protestant by catholic ascendancy'. A similar mismatch of motivation tended to associate republicanism with 'low rents, the abolition of tithes, and a tax borne by the wealthy and idle, rather than by the poor and industrious'. Curtin is convinced that the alleviation of socio-

economic grievances remained the Defenders' prime objective, however republican their slogans might seem.[75] Louis Cullen has challenged Curtin's emphasis on the agrarian and sectarian motivation of the Defenders, arguing that she underestimates the extent of popular political awareness fostered by Painite ideas.[76] Sean Connolly, writing in the early 1970s, followed McDowell's still earlier depiction of the Defenders as 'rural rioters', and denied they were politically motivated. By contrast, Elliott and Cullen insist that Defenderism was never a peasant movement, and emphasize what Elliott calls its 'distinct revolutionary tone'.[77] Both Cullen and Elliott see the Ascendancy's attitude to Catholic Relief in 1792–93 as crucial to understanding subsequent developments. Before that parliamentary tussle between Dublin and Westminster, the dominant impression presented by the Defenders is of an already functioning organization, but with an incoherence of aim. As *Freeman's Journal* observed early in 1793: 'In all other risings of the populace there was some avowed object, or some general grievance to complain of', whereas the Defenders could allege none: 'One talks of paying no hearth money, another of paying no tithes, a third of paying no rent for potato ground and some others shout about Liberty and Equality'.[78]

Elliott places the 'original and enduring heartland' of Defenderism in south-east Ulster and north Leinster, especially south Armagh and south Co. Down; and (later) in the most northerly parts of Louth, Monaghan and Cavan – areas she describes as 'hilly scrubland', with small farms and 'a long tradition of subsidiary occupations' like flax-growing or on-farm weaving. She thinks it is 'affrays at the regular fairs and markets that define the early map of Defenderism'. The migration of poorer Protestant farmers into this traditional Catholic territory – what Elliott calls 'invasion across internal cultural frontiers' – created sectarian tensions that were uncharacteristic of eighteenth-century Ulster. She argues that the worst disturbances occur where the leading gentry are anti-papist, but that most Defenders are 'not peculiarly anti-landlord'.[79] Cullen tends to agree, describing Ireland as a colonial society in which 'settlers were resented more than landlords'.[80]

The politicization of the Defenders cannot be separated from the activities of the revamped Catholic Committee of 1791–93, which 'conducted its business in a blaze of publicity, the elections to the Catholic Convention spreading an expectation of dramatic change to Catholics at every level'. But before 1795, Elliott finds little evidence of individual members of the Catholic Committee encouraging the Defenders.[81] There is some evidence, from the size and frequency of

the committee's printing bills, of a deliberate attempt to raise the political consciousness of the Catholic population. It was no accident, Elliott thinks, that the peak of Defender activity coincides with the sitting of the Catholic Convention in Dublin. As for the United Irishmen, the Society

> whipped up discontent with squibs, handbills, popular ballads, broadsheets printed on one side only for easy display, issuing from the *Northern Star* office, from Chambers's, Byrne's and McAllister's presses, sometimes from Rowan's private printing-press at Rathcoffey, left in bundles on the table of the United Irish Society, circulated far afield by the legal men on circuit, used as wrappers for commercial goods, distributed by pedlars and hawkers, and posted through people's doors.[82]

But having sown the wind, the United Irishmen were unable to ride the whirlwind.

Whatever effect the recall of Lord Fitzwilliam had on leaders of the United Irishmen, Elliott correctly insists that it persuaded 'the handful of upwardly mobile Catholics' in Antrim and Down to 'identify their own cause with that of the advanced political reformers'.[83] The identification became explicit at a meeting of the Belfast Catholics in St Mary's Chapel in March 1795.[84] Soon afterwards the United Irishmen decided to seek an alliance with the Defenders. Cullen has found a notably high proportion of Catholics from the south-Down and north-Louth areas among members of the radical wing of the United Irishmen. Luke Teeling (father of Bartholomew and Charles), the Francophile priest James Coigley and John Magennis (Catholic Convention representative for Co. Down) were United Irishmen who took part in enlisting Defenders. We know that Tone and John Keogh visited Co. Down as early as the summer of 1792, that Coigley (who Cullen thinks was active in Armagh in 1792) was later resident at Louth, that Tandy would take the Defender oath, and that Thomas Russell was travelling throughout Ulster in 1792 and 1793.[85] Cullen quotes Coigley's recollection, written in 1798, that he had 'found the inhabitants of that devoted county, Armagh, engaged in a civil war, and religion made the pretext'.[86] Cullen recalls that Armagh Presbyterians, especially in the north of the county, were poor and 'therefore unlikely to have the liberal sentiments that activated many Presbyterians'.[87] Coigley reinforces this judgement by writing of his own attempts to dampen sectarian animosities in Armagh: 'My success

would have been trifling, had it not been for the spirited exertions of that truly respectable, virtuous and enlightened body, the Dissenters of Antrim, but chiefly and particularly those of Belfast.'[88]

Cullen agrees with Elliott that there was no attempted alliance between United Irishmen and Defenders until at least 1795. He writes: 'The Defenders simply perpetuated a branch structure which was independent of the United Irishmen military chain of command – which of course itself emerged only in 1795 or 1796.'[89] Any links there were between the two organizations depended on a handful of key figures. Most of those on the Protestant/Dissenter side (Neilson, Russell and McCracken) were in prison from September 1796. That year saw the development of Orangeism beyond its status at the end of 1795, described by Curtin as then 'still essentially a lower-class protestant reaction to Defenderism'. She thinks Orangeism cemented the alliance between United Irishmen and Defenders, who found themselves confronted by a hostile government and a band of loyalist vigilantes whose barbarities were condoned by the Castle administration.[90] Elliott has no doubt that 'the fear of Orange attack became the main reason for a sudden Catholic influx into the United Irishmen after 1796'. She cites the attempt by John Ogle, High Sheriff of County Armagh, to warn the Castle of the need to restrain the Orangemen.[91]

In March 1797 the largely Catholic militia was purged, and exemplary executions visited on militiamen who had taken the United Irishmen's oath. Since the yeomanry had a largely Orange complexion, there was little hope of avoiding sectarian polarization among the lower ranks. Yet, as Elliott notes, 'even after the great Orange scare which immediately preceded the rising, Catholics were well represented in the United Irish leadership'. Nor should the failure of the 1798 rebellion be automatically attributed to sectarian animosity. Elliott observes that David Bailie Warden's contemporary account of the Down rising 'does not single out religious dissension as a major factor in its failure'.[92] In 1996, Frank Wright ridiculed the notion that the 1798 Ulster rebels were first alerted to the Catholic political threat only by events in Wexford. This was a thesis advanced by 'later political actors who wanted to destroy the very idea that there might be any unity of purpose between Protestants and Catholics'.[93] Cullen comments on Musgrave's claim that 2000 Co. Down Catholics deserted on the night before the battle of Ballynahinch: 'There is no evidence that the Defenders were present at all.' They simply failed to arrive in time.[94]

Jim Smyth, whose *Men of No Property* (1992) was republished in the bicentennial year, contrasts Defender agitation with earlier political

movements. The first Whiteboys arose in response to enclosure of commons. The Steelboys reacted against *new* high rents, *new* leases and evictions. But 'before the Defenders, none of these movements challenged the system of land ownership, or sought to abolish rents or tithes'.[95] Smyth, reviewing the troubles in Armagh, comprising about 100 incidents between 1784 and 1791, is convinced that 'the main motor of the disturbances was political'. Yet in 1791, the Defenders were still a localized movement, which Smyth illustrates with the grisly story of the murder of a newly appointed Protestant schoolmaster, and the mutilation of his family.[96] The connection between Defenderism and the Catholic agitation of 1792, Smyth thinks, is 'neither direct nor clear'. He cites the contemporary pamphleteer who observed that 'parochial meetings, county meetings, Catholic Committee, Societies of United Irishmen and Defenders were all jumbled together in one enormous mass of vice and wickedness'.[97] The Catholic John Keogh specifically linked security of tenure to the elective franchise.[98] Smyth finds Defender oaths and catechisms 'shot through with a messianic concept, expressed by a blend of French, biblical and masonic imagery'. And despite their 'remarkably sophisticated and flexible organization', the Defenders' ideology was 'a tangled skein of half-formed ideas'.[99]

'Defenderism' and Defenders are not necessarily identical. As Smyth explains: 'The first denotes a loose, pro-French, anti-ascendancy, popular ideology, the second a specific organization.' Thus, while the anti-militia rioters in Meath in mid-1793 were almost certainly Defenders, the same label affixed to their counterparts in Limerick or Wexford 'probably only reflects the contemporary habit of blaming every outrage on Defenderism'.[100] Yet Smyth identifies Defender organizations 'from Donegal to Kildare, from Galway to Louth, in at least sixteen counties and in Dublin city'. They had infiltrated the militia and created a co-ordinated, if not well-disciplined network of lodges, with lines of communication criss-crossing the country: 'Defenderism had evolved a chameleon ideology, infinitely adaptable to varying local conditions; now sectarian, now agrarian, always francophile and anti-ascendancy.' Smyth's conclusion goes further in endorsing Musgrave than any other bicentennial study: 'The vast Catholic Committee-United Irish-defender conspiracy of Sir Richard Musgrave's paranoid imagination was not, after all, entirely detached from historical reality.'[101]

While evidence of the network is undeniable, evaluation of objectives is more elusive. Smyth concedes that the Castle's 'repressive

legislation and legal harassment', by closing off most open forms of protest, 'invited, as it were, conspiratorial and revolutionary strategies'.[102] The gap between rhetoric and intention must nevertheless be allowed for. Priestley earned his nickname of 'Gunpowder Joe' in the mid-1780s when Drennan was writing his *Letters of Orellana*. Both would have defined republicanism according to eighteenth-century usage, which led John Adams in 1784 to say that the British constitution was 'in truth a republic, and has ever been so considered by foreigners, and by the most learned and Enlightened Englishmen'.[103] What the French Revolution undoubtedly did was change political rhetoric in both England and Ireland. As Smyth puts it:

> A language of 'rights' replaced the language of supplication in Catholic declarations. 'Aristocrats' and 'democrats' made their appearance. 'Levellers' reappeared with fresh force. Old words were stretched into new meanings. 'Republicanism' began to be understood in the modern rather than the eighteenth-century classical sense. 'Liberty' now carried a universalist as well as a specific historical and constitutional resonance.[104]

It was a short step from Thomas Russell's rejection of 'the infamous, intolerable position…that the mass of the people have no right to meddle in politics' to the complaint that Defenders talked of 'the famous system of liberty and equality in the most extravagant manner. Why should others have land and property, and they want it?'[105]

Kevin Whelan, in his own major contribution to the debate on the United Irishmen, argues that 'such a mass movement could only be constructed by politicizing poverty, by building bridges with existing organizations such as the Defenders, the artisan combinations, the Freemasons and the popular political clubs'. He cites the United Irishmen's decision to print 2000 copies of John Burk's *Cry of the Poor for Bread* (1795), and of Denis Taafe's *Ireland's Mirror* (1796) with its denunciation of 'pomp and property alongside abject poverty', and its claim that 'your colossal edifices are propped on our mud cabins'.[106] Sectarianism, Whelan argues, was 'deliberately injected by the government as a counter-revolutionary strategy of tension', and he contrasts the yeomanry (property-based and locally stationed) with the largely Catholic militia, where the practice of rotating units away from home meant billeting Catholic units in Protestant areas.[107] In spite of the property requirement for membership of the yeomanry, Maria Edgeworth could record: 'The magistracy and the yeomanry were

peopled by men without education, experience or hereditary respectability', and in 'their new characters they bustled and bravadoed, and sometimes in certainty of parliamentary support and public indemnity, they overleaped the bounds of the law.'[108] Her allegation is corroborated from government sources. Thomas Pelham asks General Lake 'not to suffer the course of justice to be frustrated by the delicacy which might possibly have activated the magistracy', while Lord Camden orders Lake to take action, 'if necessary beyond that which can be sanctioned by law'.[109] Whelan calls this policy 'suspending the constitution to save the constitution'.[110]

Few episodes display a greater rhetorical debt to the French Revolution than the Wexford rebellion, to which Musgrave devotes so much of his history. Whelan praises the 'forward-looking, democratic dimension' of the short-lived Wexford Republic, in contrast to the sectarian character it is usually given. This (Whelan claims) is 'essentially a propaganda creation, a necessary scapegoating of the beaten rebels and a political ploy to detach Presbyterian Ulster from radicalism'. He adds: 'If one looks more carefully at the Wexford situation, the sectarian and peasant interpretations do not fit the complex picture which one sees.'[111] Wexford has entered the folklore of the rebellion through the ambushing and cutting to pieces of the North Cork Militia at Oulart, Co. Wexford, the capture of Wexford town by the rebels, its recapture and Lake's refusal to honour the terms of surrender, and the rebel butchering of Protestant prisoners on Wexford bridge. Scullabogue and Wexford bridge came to embody the barbarity of Catholic rebellion. But the Wexford Republic itself, with its Committee of Public Safety (in which Catholics and Protestants were meant to be evenly balanced) for regulating food supplies, maintaining order in the town and preventing looting, was a phenomenon unmatched elsewhere in 1798. Whelan demonstrates the links with revolutionary France: prosperous Catholic families sent their younger sons into the French army, where Edward Sweetman, John Hay and William Barker – leading Wexford activists in the 1790s – had all served. Edward Hay, James Devereux and both Fr Michael Murphy and Fr Philip Roche had all been educated in France.[112] Whelan considers that the good order maintained in the town has been obscured by 'an event which illustrated what happened when their control was terminated – the macabre denouement of the Wexford bridge massacre', and he points to the parallel experience of the French Revolution itself. He regards the Wexford Republic as 'a tantalising brief glimpse of the potential had there been a successful United Irish coup in Ireland'.[113]

It is no surprise to find that the bicentennial verdict is equivocal. Not all historians reviewed here think Musgrave so egregiously wrongheaded as the following chapters suggest. Curtin recognizes that the picture drawn from official sources 'is often tainted with paranoia'. But she also finds 'sincere and well-meaning men engaged in a life and death struggle to preserve liberty and property from the threat of anarchic social disruption represented by the republican movement'. After 1796, the threat became formidable: 'United Irish terror paralysed the normal judicial and peace-keeping processes. The authorities responded with counter-terror, brutal and repressive to be sure, but, under the circumstances, perhaps not excessive in the light of the obstacle they confronted in re-establishing the rule of law in Ireland.'[114]

This study is less concerned with adjudicating between opposing sides in the great debate, than with showing how Musgrave's tendentious narrative helped to colour Protestant attitudes to the Catholic Irish for more than a generation. Whelan is the most explicit of modern historians in summarizing Musgrave's aims: 'to de-politicise the northern rebellion, to eliminate any signs of political rapprochement between Presbyterians and Catholics, to stress the overwhelmingly secular nature of the United Irishmen, and to demonstrate that the Presbyterians quickly quitted the movement once the errors of their ways became apparent.'[115] The reader must judge how far the following pages support that judgement.

2
Musgrave's *Rebellions*

The decidedly one-sided debate about the character of the 1798 Rebellion took place against a background of varying reactions to the Act of Union. It was also coloured by the temporary distraction of Emmet's failed rebellion and by the revival of invasion fears when the Peace of Amiens collapsed.

Sir Richard Musgrave's *Memoirs of the different rebellions in Ireland* was published in the first year of the Union (1801). It first appeared in a single volume of 636 pages with a further 210 pages of appendices and postscripts. Its thrust is seen in the author's dedication to Lord Cornwallis, the luckless commander at Yorktown, and (since 1798) Lord-lieutenant and commander-in-chief in Ireland: 'The Jacobins, both in England and Ireland, in order to feed the flames of rebellion, have insinuated both orally and through the press that the rebellion arose from the oppression of the Roman catholics; an assertion as false as it is iniquitous!' Musgrave's dedication continues: 'Every person who peruses these Memoirs must perceive that by uniting the two kingdoms, your Excellency has laid a solid foundation for the future prosperity of Ireland, by extinguishing the seeds of dissension, and by silencing the voice of faction.'[1] It was somewhat disingenuous. Cornwallis, who would soon resign as Lord-lieutenant over Pitt's failure to introduce Catholic Emancipation, quickly disowned Musgrave's flattery. Both the *Critical Review* and the *Monthly Review* jubilantly quoted Cornwallis's rebuff: 'Had his Lordship been apprized of the contents and nature of the work, he would never have lent the sanction of his name to a book which tends so strongly to revive the dreadful animosities which have so long distracted this country, and which it is the duty of every good subject to endeavour to compose.' His Lordship requested that 'in any future edition of the book, the permission to dedicate may be omitted'.[2]

In March 1802, the *Monthly Review* offered its own prospectus for the kind of history of 1798 that it wanted written. What was needed was an examination of 'the machine of the Irish government, connected by secret springs with the cabinet of London'. An analysis was required, revealing 'the causes, the origin, and the progress of disaffection' and how far 'it was owing to inequalities of fortunes and rights, to oppression, to national jealousy and hereditary animosities, to bigotry, and to delusive speculation'. Instead, the reviewer complains, Musgrave had 'satisfied himself with assuming the character of the historian of the moment, and with labouring to deserve the plaudits of a party'. Far from extinguishing the seeds of dissension and silencing the voice of faction, Sir Richard seemed determined to achieve the opposite.[3] The *Critical Review* similarly censured the incendiary nature of Musgrave's account. Not since the Gordon riots of 1780 had the editors been faced with 'so much polemic error, inflammability, and gross departure from all truth and decency, as in the present historian of the Irish rebellions'.[4]

Musgrave's first edition of 1250 copies sold out in two months, before any review appeared. The *Monthly Magazine* noticed the second edition, in a supplementary number of the journal in July 1802. Musgrave's object, the reviewer decides, was 'to kindle the expiring embers of discord and destruction'. The review continues:

> A glow of triumph suffuses [the author's] cheeks when he relates the last agonies of those deluded Catholics who paid the forfeit of their offences; nor does he conceal his sorrow at those instances where the gallows, to use his own elegant phraseology, has been deprived of its due! The Papists of Ireland must be annihilated before the empire can be secure.

With heavy irony the *Monthly Magazine* contrasts Musgrave's rigour towards Catholics with his lenient treatment of Protestants of the Established Church:

> If he thinks [the Catholics] so reprobate a race as to justify whipping, for the purpose of procuring evidence – if he thinks that public order should be supported by free quarter, and that the laws should be invigorated by kidnapping men and sending them on board tenders – yet are his tender mercies shed abundantly on the injured unoffending Protestants, who are represented to have been all meekness, all forbearance, and when one cheek was smitten almost to have presented the other![5]

The Unitarian editor of the *Monthly Magazine*, Richard Phillips, was a notable 'Jacobin' in Establishment eyes. The *Antijacobin Review* cites Musgrave's tribute to Protestant patriotism: 'I did not hear of a *single instance* of disaffection among the *Protestant* yeoman in the county of *Wicklow*, or that a person of that persuasion was concerned in the conspiracy or rebellion.' And it quotes, without irony, Musgrave's 'pious zeal' when he exclaims:

> Good God! Will that day ever arrive, when a pure, a simple, a rational, an undefiled religion shall be established among the deluded natives of Ireland? When the clouds of superstition and ignorance, which so much obscure the human mind, shall be dispelled by religion and reason, those bright luminaries, which the Deity has benignly afforded to erring man, to direct his wandering steps through the thorny paths of life, and to guide our feet into the way of peace? We may say to the popish multitude in Ireland in the words of holy writ, 'ye do err, not knowing the scriptures'.[6]

The patronizing self-righteousness of the Protestant Ascendancy, at its least attractive, could scarcely be more explicitly stated.

Musgrave was himself an archetypal Ascendancy figure: landowner, member of the Anglican Church of Ireland, and MP for Lismore in the Irish Parliament. He had received a baronetcy in 1782, and served as Justice of the Peace and as High Sheriff of Waterford. On the loss of his parliamentary seat at the Union, he received the lucrative post of collector of the Dublin city excise. In 1794 he had supported the government against the campaign for parliamentary reform at Westminster. The reformers sought to purify a supposedly corrupt legislative body 'by conferring the elective franchise on a greater number of the community than enjoy it at present'; but unless the newly enfranchised 'are of purer principles than those who possess it already, their theory falls to the ground'. Musgrave insists that 'the constitution, as it now stands, is more favourable to the liberty of the subject than it ever was at any former period since its foundation'.[7] No wonder the *Antijacobin Review* welcomed Musgrave's *Rebellions* as 'this long laborious, important, and as far as we have hitherto been able to judge, impartial narrative', bearing 'every genuine mark of authenticity, as well as the most laborious and patient investigation'. The reviewer predicts that 'this clear, methodical and comprehensive record of facts will at least be viewed by posterity, without those prejudices which generally lie in the way of such inquiries'. Indeed Musgrave's narrative may 'preserve

other adventurers from those terrors and sufferings, which rash experiments and innovations in church and state, seldom fail to excite and inflict'.[8] Not all readers would have been reassured by the reviewer's claim that Sir Richard 'has not only stood boldly forward to defend his country, but like another Caesar *recorded* his own triumph'.[9]

The format of Musgrave's *Rebellions* admittedly implies a work of patient historical scholarship. But most of the evidence presented in the appendices comes from official sources: admissions extracted by whipping, denunciations by informers, anecdotal accounts magnified in the telling. Two centuries later, Thomas Pakenham, in the preface to his own history of 1798, found that sources were 'embarrassingly rich on the loyalist side'; with 10,000-odd documents in the Rebellion Papers at Dublin Castle, but 'fewer than a hundred revolutionary documents of 1798'.[10] The weight of Musgrave's appendices is exerted in support of the central themes of the main text: consistency of Catholic motivation between 1798 and all earlier Irish rebellions, continuity of treasonable and violent 'Jacobin' intentions of the United Irishmen between 1791 and 1798, and concealment of a radical 'Jacobin' agenda under the campaign for parliamentary reform. As for any shortcomings in the Castle administration, 'Sir Richard can see nothing to blame but its over-abundant clemency'.[11]

Musgrave's main contention is that the 1798 rebellion had purely religious causes, and can only be understood as the latest manifestation of popish aggression. He cites Wicklow as a prime example:

> All the efforts of the united Irishmen to make the people of Wicklow join in their rebellious designs proved unavailing, till they persuaded the Popish clergy to co-operate with them for that purpose; which took place in the year 1796, as stated in the report of the secret commission on the evidence of doctor McNevin, a Roman catholic, and one of the leaders in the rebellion.[12]

Musgrave insists that 'the war there was purely religious; for there was no other motive to actuate the mass of the people except the hope of plunder, which was held out as an additional encouragement'.[13] And he appeals to the 'very able pamphlet' of Dr Woodward, Anglican Bishop of Cloyne, for evidence that in Munster 'a conspiracy was formed for the destruction of the Protestant Church'.[14]

Musgrave's thesis depends on a serious distortion of the map of disaffection. Approximately 60 per cent of the main text and appendices of *Rebellions* is devoted to Wexford, Wicklow, Carlow and Kilkenny,

and about four-fifths to Leinster. By contrast, barely 3 per cent focuses on Co. Antrim and Co. Down. Musgrave himself seems to have noticed this imbalance. In a letter to George Lenox-Conyngham in April 1799, he admitted: 'I have undertaken to write a history of the rebellion, and I have got very copious information on what passed in Leinster and Munster, but I have little or no knowledge of what occurred in Ulster. May I request then the favour of your assistance as to what happened in the county of Derry?' He posed questions about the origin and aims of the Defenders, whether they were exclusively Catholic, and when they joined forces with the United Irishmen. Finally he asked: 'Did the Papists and Presbyterians ever cordially unite, and at what time in the rebellion?' Musgrave is 'much at loss to know how they could ever be made to unite'. And he adds: 'Any anecdotes of atrocities committed by the United Irishmen and Defenders will be very acceptable.'[15]

Whatever 'anecdotes' Musgrave may have received, the imbalance remained uncorrected on publication. The distorting effect of the work's geographical bias is illustrated by Louis Cullen's findings on the social and religious composition of Wexford and Wicklow. Cullen sees Wexford and its adjoining region of south Wicklow as 'the most successful Protestant settlements outside Ulster'. But these settlements were 'almost exclusively Anglican, consisting not of a dependent population, but of largely self-sufficient farmers'. He thinks the conflict in Wexford and Wicklow 'had nothing to do with agrarian distress as has often been asserted, and much to do with the destructive competitiveness of minor Protestant and Catholic *notables*'.[16] These two counties shared with Armagh 'the distinction of being the strongest Anglican rural communities in the entire island'. Cullen thinks this explains not only the violence of the sectarian conflict in the south-east, but also 'the more vindictive stance of the Protestant Ascendancy in Wexford after the rebellion was crushed'.[17] Wexford was untypical of the rebellion as a whole.

Musgrave's deep-seated anti-Catholic prejudice is clear from his anonymous 85-page pamphlet, published in Dublin in 1799 under the pseudonym 'Veridicus', and directed at 'Veritas' (Dr Caulfield, Catholic Bishop of Ferns) who had presumed to defend the Catholic clergy of Wexford. 'Veritas' had disclaimed any intention 'to investigate, much less vindicate the causes or motives which led the deluded people of this country, to such sanguinary acts of ferocity and barbarism'. Musgrave offers to save Veritas the trouble of such investigation:

> by telling him, that many doctrines of the Popish Church, not only encouraged, but even recommended persecution and bloodshed,

> ever since the beginning of the 12th century, that these abominable doctrines have been frequently sanctioned by general councils, by Popes' bulls and epistles, and that they have been constantly enforced in every country in Europe, where the Roman Pontiff had attained any authority.[18]

Musgrave recalls Innocent III's decrees of the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215, commanding the extirpation of heretics on pain of 'ecclesiastical censure', and granting to those who undertook such action the same indulgences and privileges as were granted to those 'who visited the holy land'.[19] Sir Richard quotes the letter written by Gunpowder-plotter Sir Everard Digby to his wife: 'If I thought there had been the least sin in the plot, I would not have been of it for all the world, and nothing but a zeal for God's religion drew me into it'.[20] To justify these excursions into history, Musgrave quotes Archbishop Troy's 1798 pastoral letter: 'The religious principles of Roman Catholics being unchangeable, they are applicable to all times'. Like the decrees of Innocent III, the words of Troy's pastoral letter will reverberate through Establishment polemic for decades.[21]

As in *Rebellions*, Musgrave's 1799 pamphlet focused on Wexford.[22] But although appealing for an Act of Union, and dismissing the Defenders as 'a Popish banditti', he does express regret that the Armagh Orangemen 'who obtained a decided superiority over their antagonists, pushed their revenge to an extreme'.[23] The pamphlet, appearing in March, ran through several editions and a Cork reprint in a matter of months. Reviewing the publication, the *Antijacobin* approved Musgrave's attack on the Catholic doctrine of exclusive salvation – a dogma that would be much used as a polemical weapon by critics. In *Rebellions*, Sir Richard observes that the same doctrine 'is inculcated in the Koran of Mahomet'.[24] The *Critical Review*, noticing Musgrave's third edition, charges the author with claiming that the 1798 rebellion 'originated solely from the very spirit and principles of the Roman-catholic religion itself'. The *Critical* ridicules Sir Richard's search for the seeds of rebellion 'as long as *seven or eight centuries ago* in the bulls of tyrannical popes or the decrees of absurd and oftentimes unconstitutional councils'.[25] The same reviewer quotes Musgrave's claim that 'the reader will find, in the course of the late rebellion, that the sanguinary fanaticks who embarked in it were sure of enjoying happiness in a future state, for having risen in arms against an heretical king'.[26]

By the time the *Critical Review* returned to Musgrave in October 1802, the editors were able to notice the *Reply to the misrepresentations*

of Sir Richard from the clergy of Wexford. Dr Caulfield, of 'Veritas' fame, claimed that 'if one-tenth part of what is asserted by Sir Richard Musgrave were founded in fact, the parties would not at this day be alive to refute his allegations'. Could anyone who knew Co. Wexford believe that the Bishop himself 'would remain at this day unarraigned and unindicted if there were any shadow of proof to support this atrocious charge – to have given his benediction to an armed body of insurgents?'[27] The *Critical* accepts the Bishop's emphatic denial of every allegation against him, and prints the full text of the repudiation.[28] The *Monthly Review* also quoted the clergy's *Reply*, adding the observation: 'We congratulate the reverend Gentlemen on the satisfactory vindication of themselves which they here submit to the public. It is able, temperate and becoming. Their professions are loyal, and their sentiments constitutional; we are not disposed to call either in question, nor do we see any reason for so doing.'[29]

The same issue of the *Monthly Review* noticed another publication directed at Musgrave's *Rebellions*. Written by Thomas Townshend, himself a member of the Irish Parliament, it turned the charge of religious obscurantism against Sir Richard:

> That any man can be found, who, in the present mind of Europe, looks for the causes of popular disquiet in the theological fustian of the thirteenth century, is not less than a miracle! In this triumphant day of a shameless and presumptuous Atheism, to impeach the most general profession of Christianity, the religion of all the crowns and cabinets of all the kingdoms of the continent of Europe, as the cause of blood and treason in Ireland, is to my humble mind, an irregularity beyond the adjustment of reason.[30]

Musgrave's response to the gauntlet thrown down by Caulfield and Townshend was so swift that the *Critical* could notice it alongside the review already cited from the same issue. Sir Richard reports that he has received 'the most flattering assurances of the accuracy of my narration; particularly from the town and county of Wexford, whose loyal inhabitants equally reprobate the Reply of Dr Caulfield and his priests, and the letter of Mr Townshend'.[31]

The *Critical Review* leaves its readers to decide for themselves 'both upon the nature of the late sanguinary rebellion, as far as it is related to the doctrines and practice of the members of the catholic community, and upon the contradictory testimonials adduced by the

antagonist writers before us'. But while acknowledging that Musgrave had produced by far the fullest account, the *Critical* judges that

> the hasty and intemperate manner in which he has collected his evidence, the fallacious and derogatory views he has formed of the doctrines of the catholic church, and the invincible hatred he displays in every page towards members of that communion, must render them a very doubtful source to every future compiler of Irish history.

Surely, the *Critical*'s reviewer suggests, Sir Richard cannot avoid thinking himself 'a little too partial to his own system, in denominating the late administration of Ireland "*the mildest government in the universe*".'[32]

Musgrave's polemical technique is shown by his treatment of a document he prints as an appendix. Bishop Hussey's pastoral letter to the Catholic clergy of the united dioceses of Waterford and Lismore, is described by Musgrave as 'this inflammatory production'. It was published at Waterford spring assizes in 1797, 'when the baneful doctrines of the united Irishmen were spreading fast in that country'. The pastoral letter refers to 'these critical and awful times', when the 'remnants of old oppression, and new principles which tend to anarchy, are struggling for victory', and when 'a moral earthquake shakes all Europe'. But the Bishop is consoled by reflecting that the memory of 'the legal injustices and cruelties formerly practised in this country, by men who made religious differences a stalking-horse for political purposes, is completely and happily effaced, I hope for ever'. Urging his clergy to offer their parishioners '*the words of eternal life*, without fear or deference towards the enemies of our holy faith', the Bishop charges them 'to avoid all political interferences, as unworthy the ministers of him *whose kingdom is not of this world*'. If Catholic troops frequent Protestant services, the priest's duty is 'to expostulate with them', instructing them 'that in all matters regarding the service of the king, their officers are competent to command them, and that they are bound to obey; but in matters regarding the service of the king of kings, their officers have no authority over them'. Religious and political authorities, 'like parallel lines in mathematics', can never touch each other. And he concludes: 'The truly liberal man is he, who makes religion a guide for his own personal and private conduct, and not a rule to guide – to govern – or to compel others to act against their consciences, and their religion.'[33]

Musgrave seeks to undermine the eirenical tone of Hussey's pastoral charge by critical footnotes. Readers are reminded that 'Ireland is the only country in Europe in which the pope claims and exercises the exclusive investiture of bishopricks', and are assured that the Bishop must have known that there were Catholic clergy in the ranks of United Irishmen, 'and that they were secretly promoting those outrages, which broke out soon after in every part of Munster'. The pastoral charge had led (says Musgrave) to the withdrawal of Catholic children from the free school at Waterford, while the Bishop's advice to Catholic soldiery is called 'a gross falsehood, calculated to inflame the popish military against their officers'. Hussey's claim that Catholicism is suited to all political systems, is contrasted with Troy's statement that it is well suited to a republic, 'the establishment of which was the main object of the united irishmen'. And Hussey's condescending admission that 'it may well suit a small sect to regulate its creed and form of worship, according to the shape and form of government of the limited boundaries where that sect arose', is seen as an insult to the Established Church.[34]

Bishop Hussey's 1797 pastoral charge ends in the confident belief that momentum for the removal of still remaining discriminatory laws against Catholics is already unstoppable:

> The vast rock is already detached from the mountain's brow, and whoever opposes its descent and removal, must be crushed by his own rash endeavours. The popery laws are upon the eve of being extinguished for ever; and may no wicked hand ever again attempt to divide the land, by making religious distinctions a mask, to divide – to disturb – to oppose it.

Musgrave's gloss on these optimistic words is that 'according to this prediction, if the king, or any member of the lords or commons, or even the whole of them, should oppose the repeal of the restrictive laws which remain, they would be murdered by the banditti, who were at that time committing robbery and assassination'. The whole tone of the letter 'breathes a fanatical spirit of intolerance'.[35] Closing the review of *Rebellions*, which had spread over five issues, the *Antijacobin* cannot find room to quote the pastoral charge *verbatim*, and so reproduces only those of Hussey's statements which Musgrave had found offensive – together with Musgrave's footnotes. The *Antijacobin* completes this tendentious catalogue by claiming that Sir Richard's 'observations on whipping and free quarters' prove

the severity to have been 'expedient, salutary, and, in the end, merciful'.[36]

Musgrave entitled one chapter 'The *progress* the leaders of the conspiracy made to the end of the year 1797, in *uniting* the *presbyterians* and *Papists*'. He claimed that the Catholic Committee 'shewed much zeal in promoting this junction; but the exterminating spirit which their sectaries showed during the rebellion', proved that the Catholics 'meant merely to lull the fears and suspicions of the presbyterians, and not to unite with them'.[37] Musgrave refuses to distinguish between the moderate, non-sectarian campaign of the United Irishmen in 1791–92 (when Britain was not yet formally at war with France) and their undeniably seditious activities of 1796–98 – after Fitzwilliam's replacement by Camden. Musgrave is certain that 'there was as much treason in the city of Dublin in the year 1792 as in the year 1798; but with this difference, that it was not organized into system'.[38] He sees links with the Jacobin societies in France of 1791–92, ignoring the difference in character between the French societies of the pre-war years and their transformed role under Robespierre.[39] Thus Musgrave finds that the response of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen, to the French Jacobins' address to the Volunteers, contained 'the most extravagant encomiums on the French constitution'. In the same period, when the Legislative Assembly held sway and France was not yet a republic, Musgrave notes that Rabaut St Etienne, 'the bosom friend of Brissot', leader of the Girondins in the Legislative Assembly, passed some time between Dublin and Belfast, 'sowing the seeds of future combustion'.[40]

The *Monthly Review* categorically refutes Musgrave's insinuation, asserting:

> It is well known that Rabaut had no knowledge of the English language; that he never set foot out of France; that he had no intimacy with Brissot until the meeting of the [National] Convention; and that he never acted politically with that leader, except during the short time that they sat together as members of that body.

Rabaut was 'distinguished by his labours' in promoting the limited monarchy of the 1791 constitution 'so much reprobated by the Republican party', and voted against bringing Louis XVI to trial. Rabaut did not desert the royalist cause until 'it was become no longer a doubt that the court had formed an understanding with the declared enemies of the country'.[41] Musgrave not only applies the principle of guilt by association to Rabaut, but defends the conviction of the

Sheares brothers on charges of treason, because they had been 'at Paris, when the King and Queen were put to death, and continued there during the tyranny of Robespierre'. They were also alleged to have spoken '*with delight* of the *scenes of carnage* which they had seen there.'[42]

Nearer home, Musgrave thought the 1792 Bastille Day celebrations in Belfast 'opened a wide and extensive theatre for traitors and disaffected persons of every rank, character and religious persuasion, to fraternize and spread the infection of their noxious principles'.[43] Similarly the National Guards of Dublin, in their provocative 'green uniforms with buttons, having a harp, and a cap of liberty instead of a crown', are censured for addressing one another as 'citizen soldier', and for assembling in December 1792 'to celebrate the victory of the French, and the celebration of universal liberty'.[44] The French victory was a defeat for the despotic powers, but by the end of December 1792 Louis XVI was on trial and France was undeniably a republic. Focusing on Musgrave's 'heterogeneous coalition' of Catholics and Presbyterians, the *Antijacobin* quotes from Burke's *Letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe* (1792) printed in *Rebellions*:

> As to the low, thoughtless, wild and profligate, who have joined themselves with those of other professions (meaning the presbyterians) but of the same character, you are not to imagine for a moment that I can suppose them to be met with any thing else, than the manly and enlightened energy of a firm government, supported by the united efforts of all virtuous men; if ever their proceedings should become so considerable as to demand its notice, I really think that such associations should be crushed in their very commencement.[45]

Burke's *Letter* actually argued in favour of concessions to Catholics, in contrast to his insistence on denying relief to English Dissenters. But by 1801, invoking Burke was enough to clinch the argument that the Presbyterians of the early 1790s had been playing with fire.

Musgrave himself employs the metaphor of combustion in linking the suppression of Jacobinism in Ireland with the repression of anti-government protests in England. He describes the address, given to 'the herd of republicans assembled at Dungannon' in 1793, as 'a sermon or rather a political discourse, fraught with phlogistical principles'. The preacher, William Steel Dickson – described by Musgrave as 'a presbyterian minister and a noted demagogue' – is thus bracketed with

Joseph Priestley ('Dr Phlogiston') and the Unitarian Dissenters. Like the English Unitarians, Irish Presbyterians were not given credit for the Christian motivation of their politics. Musgrave was being ironic when he noted that Dickson had recommended Catholic Emancipation and parliamentary reform 'on the basis of Christianity'.[46] Dickson himself records how he rejected the arguments for a gradualist approach to emancipation as 'equally *unfounded*, *insulting* and *blasphemous*'.[47] In the 1770s Dickson preached against the American war, and in 1779 famously pleaded for the inclusion of Catholics in the ranks of the Volunteers.[48] An early member of the United Irishmen, Dickson was arrested on the eve of the rebellion on suspicion of being a leader of the rebel army. Imprisoned first on a prison ship, and then at Fort George in Scotland, he was released in 1802. His fellow prisoners included, at his own count: 'three magistrates, three barristers, two physicians, one attorney, one apothecary, one printer and bookseller, one printer, one proprietor of a newspaper, one dentist, one military captain, one runner to a bank, one merchant, one Presbyterian minister, one broker, and two young gentlemen without profession, trade or calling'. He observed that 'as a majority of the prisoners were deemed principal authors and promoters of the Irish insurrection, and as only one-fifth of said prisoners were Catholics, the representation of that insurrection as a *Popish* rebellion cannot be confided in as very truth.'[49]

Dickson survived imprisonment. The Rev. Dr Porter, Presbyterian minister at Newtonwards, did not. Like Dickson, a campaigner for parliamentary reform and Catholic Emancipation, Porter (according to Musgrave's report on his trial) 'attempted to defend his conduct, on the grounds that every person has a right to form his own opinion of the eligibility of what kind of government he would wish to live under. This doctrine has been inculcated by Price and Priestley'. Musgrave adds the grimly laconic comment: 'This man was hanged at the rear of his conventicle.'[50] Though never a sworn United Irishman, Porter was undoubtedly sympathetic to the movement. Convicted on the evidence of a perjured witness, Porter probably deserved the Rev. Henry Montgomery's later tribute: 'His true epitaph would have been *Murdered by martial law for the crime of writing 'Billy Bluff,'* The seven *Billy Bluff Letters*, written in 1796, first appeared in the *Northern Star*, and were later published as *Billy Bluff and Squire Firebrand, or a Sample of the Times*.[51] And with similar irony, Porter's published sermon *Wind and Weather* paid tribute to the Protestant wind that had dispersed the French fleet, yet advised the government to find a wiser policy towards Ireland, rather than relying on Providence.[52]

One of Musgrave's appendices lists Dissenting ministers in the counties of Down and Antrim 'implicated in the rebellion of 1798'. His 18 names (of whom two were hanged, six transported, two imprisoned, and two deported) are followed by a catalogue of 'outrages by the defenders in the year 1793'.[53] His readiness to bracket Defenders with United Irishmen is shown in another appendix entitled 'Some outrages committed by the defenders and united Irishmen in the year 1795'. More than a dozen incidents are listed, but all were perpetrated by Defenders. The same appendix cites evidence, given in January 1796 by a former Defender, that he was required to take an oath 'to destroy the members of every religion but their own'.[54] If true, this could hardly have helped the presumed alliance between Defenders and United Irishmen.

Musgrave describes the 1793 motion for parliamentary reform as 'the great desideratum of united Irishmen, and one of the engines by which they hoped to overturn and prostrate the constitution'[55] Erskine had argued forcibly that 'a desire to reform abuses in government is not at all connected with disloyalty to its establishment'. Musgrave dismisses the claim as 'plausible but delusive'.[56] The assumption throughout *Rebellions* is that the United Irishmen's reform campaign was a cloak for Jacobin revolutionary objectives in imitation of France. Yet the resolution adopted at an early meeting of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen, and printed in full in Musgrave's own appendices, recites a rather longer history of frustration:

> When we reflect how often the freemen and freeholders of Dublin have solicited the enaction of good, and the repeal of bad laws – how often, for succeeding years, they have petitioned against the obnoxious and unconstitutional police act – and how often all these applications have been treated with the most perfect contumacy and contempt…

The resolution portrays the majority of the Irish Parliament as 'the representatives of their own money, or the hired servants of the English government; whose minister here is appointed for the sole purpose of dealing out corruption to them – at the expense of Irish liberty, Irish commerce and Irish improvement'.[57]

This is robust language, but in citing the declaration of 'a similar society in Belfast', Dublin's United Irishmen appeal to the principles of the European Enlightenment – newly endorsed by the French:

> In the present great æra of reform, when major governments are falling in every quarter of Europe; when religious persecution is

> compelled to abjure her tyranny over conscience; when the rights of men are ascertained in theory, and that theory is substantiated by practice; when antiquity can no longer defend absurd and oppressive forms against the common sense and common interests of mankind…we think it our duty, as Irishmen, to come forward and state what we feel to be our heavy grievance, and what we know to be our effective remedy.

The Belfast text identifies specific parliamentary abuses, but sees them as 'but symptoms of that mortal disease, which corrodes the vitals of our constitution, and leaves to the people in their own government but the shadow of a name'.[58]

The language echoes that of Price and Priestley, which Musgrave doubtless regarded as itself evidence of the Jacobin context in which the Belfast Society's three resolutions evolved. The subjoined oath of the Belfast Society famously embodied the pledge 'to forward a brotherhood of affection, an identity of interests, a communion of rights, an union of power, among Irishmen of all religious persuasions'.[59] Given Musgrave's assumption of permanent and irreconcilable hostility between Catholic and Protestant, such utopian aims could be presented as self-evident (though dangerous) nonsense. Claiming that *The Press* was set up in 1797 'for the purpose of vilifying the government, of reprobating its leading members, and of inciting persons to murder them', Sir Richard quotes from the issue of 26 December 1797: 'The catholicks and presbyterians are united in indissoluble ties, like dying martyrs, in a common cause priding themselves in mutual good offices, and for ever abjuring the barbarous fanaticism that made them hate each other.' According to the same extract, nothing remains to oppose the union of all Irishmen 'but twenty-five thousand, as near as may be, of bigots, hirelings and dependents; just enough to furnish the lord lieutenant with addresses'.[60]

In his zeal to demonstrate continuity of violent intentions within the United Irish ranks, Musgrave ridicules Samuel Neilson's evidence (given before the secret committee of the House of Lords) that the society's military organization in Ulster began only in the autumn of 1796. If that were true, Sir Richard remarks, 'they must have collected arms with great celerity, for it appears, that before the close of the year, the conspirators had, in Belfast alone, 528 guns, 399 bayonets, 88 pistols, 567 pikes, 12,130 ball cartridges, 15,593 balls, 566 pounds of powder, 6 cannon and one mortar'.[61] Unsurprisingly, Musgrave is unwilling to recognize the way in which the recall of Fitzwilliam transformed the situation, though he prints, as an appendix, Grattan's

Answer to the Roman Catholics, with its assertion that the continuance of Lord Fitzwilliam in the office of Viceroy is 'necessary for the prosperity of this kingdom'. Grattan's words of condolence for his country are also cited: 'I tremble at the return to power of your old taskmasters; that combination which galled the country with its tyranny, insulted her by its manners, exhausted her by its rapacity, and slandered her by its malice.'[62] In the main text, Musgrave counters Grattan's rhetoric by recalling that Fitzwilliam had exceeded his instructions 'in attempting to repeal the whole of the popery laws, and to remove most of the old officers who had served his majesty the greater part of their lives with the utmost fidelity'.[63]

Musgrave cites the triumphalist 1795 boast of the *Northern Star* that 'the whole people of Ireland, with exceptions scarcely worth mentioning' now held opinions which the United Irishmen had 'broached three years ago, and which were then considered by the wise, the constitutional, the moderate and the cautious, as symptoms not only of madness, but even of wickedness in the extreme'. Musgrave thinks this reflects Belfast republicans' confidence 'that the departure of lord Fitzwilliam had poisoned the minds of the people, and had infected them with the contagious doctrines of the united Irishmen'.[64] By arguing that the United Irish propaganda roused the Catholic peasantry, and by deliberately blurring the distinction between Defenders and United Irishmen, Musgrave is able to turn Catholics into Jacobins. He sometimes recognize the incongruity, as when he mocks the disappointment supposedly felt by Irish Catholics on being told by the French 'that their object was to give them a new constitution, similar to that in France; that they would not suffer any persons to be persecuted for religious opinions; and, as they considered both religions as ridiculous and absurd, they laughed at those who contended about them'.[65] The French officers were allegedly 'filled with amazement on hearing the Irish recruits say, when they offered their services, that they came to take arms for France and the blessed Virgin'.[66]

The *Antijacobin*, concluding its 30-page review of *Rebellions*, follows Musgrave in linking the 'heinous crimes' of 1798 with the French Revolution: 'If not the twin brother, it may be called the first-born hard-featured offspring, with the mark of Cain upon it, of that most wicked, rebellious and blood-stained confederacy'.[67] The review's closing paragraphs on this 'laborious, well digested and powerful work' are devoted to warning of the continuing Catholic threat: 'The entire ascendancy of the Romish priests over the minds of their flocks is equally formidable and beyond dispute, and proves, throughout this

history, that the subversion of established law and order was only a secondary object, the extermination of every Protestant, as such, being the first.' Sir Richard Musgrave has 'humanely erected a beacon to warn future adventurers of the fatal rocks and shoals upon which so many of his misguided and intemperate countrymen, who ought to have known better, have been ship-wrecked and perished'.[68]

The editor, John Gifford, would continue to promote Musgrave's propagandist arguments – not least by incorporating them in his own three-volume life of Pitt (1809)[69]. Before then the *British Critic*, the other major pro-Establishment literary periodical, would engage Musgrave to review the work of his principal challenger.[70]

3
Musgrave as Reviewer

The principal riposte to Musgrave's *Memoirs of the different rebellions in Ireland* was Francis Plowden's *Historical Review of the State of Ireland*, published in 1803. The barrister author, brother of a Catholic priest, dedicated his work to the Prince of Wales, claiming it was 'intended as an act of justice to the Irish nation'. Its more limited aim was ostensibly to promote acceptance of the Union: 'We are now one people, and that we may ever be one in affection as well as interest was the motive for undertaking the work.'[1] But Plowden's parallel propaganda purpose soon becomes clear. Excusing himself for referring to 'remote periods of Irish history', like the pontificate of the English Pope Adrian and the events of Henry II's reign, Plowden expects the reader to learn

> that the native diffidence, jealousy and hatred which the Irish showed for so many centuries towards the English, originated not in the difference of religion; for even in the heat of the last two centuries, they never were mounted to a higher pitch, and never were acted upon more uninterruptedly than during that long period of nearly 400 years, during which both nations professed the same religion.[2]

Plowden was thus challenging Musgrave's main contention: that the 1798 Rebellion was merely the last in a long line of Catholic uprisings against Protestants.

Curiously, the Catholic Plowden's *State of Ireland* was commissioned by the British government. In his own account of an interview with Prime Minister Addington in 1801, after the publication of Musgrave's *Rebellions*, Plowden claims to have argued that 'the calumny, traduction and misrepresentation, under which the bulk of the Irish

laboured, was a national grievance', and that 'the evil was increased by the countenance and forced circulation given to Sir R. Musgrave's Memoirs of the Irish Rebellions; a work so false, inflammatory and malignant that Lord Cornwallis had been forced publicly to disclaim the dedication of it'. Plowden apparently further urged that 'a fair, impartial and authentic history of that country should be written to counteract the effects of Sir R. Musgrave's and such other *Orange* publications'. Having accepted the commission to undertake the work, and gone over to Ireland to collect documentary material while on leave from his legal duties, Plowden records: 'The Premier remarked that the only remaining consideration was to settle what compensation the author should be allowed for his time and trouble in going over to Ireland.'[3] A fee of £300 was agreed.

It soon emerged that Addington's concept of impartiality and authenticity differed from that of his commissioned author. The *Monthly Review* would later mischievously suggest that the Prime Minister's negotiations with Plowden resembled his flawed peace negotiations with Napoleon: 'The Preliminaries are well received, and cordially ratified by the Premier: but when he is required to carry into execution some of the articles, he raises a controversy as to the terms.' We are told that, in his interview with Plowden, 'the Minister explicitly stated that he owed his high station to his opposition to Catholic Emancipation'. Addington was later angered by Plowden's reference in his *State of Ireland* to the papers given to Lord Fingall and Dr Troy by Pitt and Cornwallis, 'respecting their going out of office upon their inability to carry the Catholic question'.[4] Addington also objected to the sharp distinction drawn between the methods of Camden and Cornwallis as viceroys of Ireland. The *Monthly Review* comments:

> The Minister admits his own want of foresight, and seems to have entertained unreasonable expectations of conformity to his views on the part of Mr Plowden. This appears when he reproached the author for favouring the Catholic claims; when he blames him for disparaging 'the respectable names of Clare, Foster and Beresford', and when he upbraids him for distinguishing between two late Irish administrations, and for unreasonably extolling one of them.

More provocatively, the reviewer asks: 'Was there ever a man in Ireland of either party that did not regard the two governments which immediately preceded the union as not less distinguishable than light and darkness?' The *Monthly* 'would as soon believe with Mr Plowden all the

tenets of the Catholic Church, as subscribe to Mr Addington's doctrine of the identity of spirit and principles of the Camden and Cornwallis administrations'.[5]

The *Monthly Review* is nevertheless highly critical of Plowden's account of earlier centuries: 'He adopts the fabulous tales of ancient Hibernia, and sanctions their currency in a manner that obliges us to impute to him a blind incredulity, if we acquit him of disingenuousness. He decides on dubious points on very scanty evidence; he makes representations which are contradictory to facts related by himself…' The reviewer endorses Plowden's view of the conduct of Elizabeth I, remarking that her policy was based on 'narrow, ill judged and oppressive' principles and that 'unhappily the like description is applicable to the behaviour of this country' up to the Act of Union. Plowden should have given due weight to the enormities committed by Catholics: 'Let him ascribe to national hate, to bigotry, to savage manners, and to real grievances, each its proper share in bringing on this dreadful storm.' He could then have made clear that 'this sanguinary policy is not essential to the Catholic hierarchy, and has no necessary connection with the spiritual authority claimed by the Pope, nor with the doctrines, institutions and rites of that church'. But Plowden found it easier 'to display the zeal of a partisan, to practise the arts of a Sophist, to jumble facts and conjectures together, without regard to time and place, and to perplex us by the confusion of his narrative'.[6]

Plowden's account of the eighteenth century, the *Monthly* concedes, 'presents undeniable claims to attention'. The author is commended for his insistence that the intolerance towards Catholics which dated from William III's reign 'is by no means to be laid to the charge of that prince, but to the jealousy of the Irish Protestants, and to the party in England which thwarted that monarch's views in so many other instances'. And the reviewer notes that Plowden's claim that 'the grievous disturbances occasioned by the White Boys were out of distress and oppression, and had no relation either to religion or politics' is admitted by Lord Clare himself.[7] Nevertheless, in applauding the 'very impartial account' of the parties and groups which had 'distracted Ireland since the aera of the French Revolution', the reviewer decides that the extracts from Plowden that follow 'will shew how incurable were the religious animosities in the country'.[8] The *Monthly Review* shrewdly notes that Plowden's readers should have been more fully 'apprized of the successive variations in the sentiments of the society of the Irish union [i.e. the United Irishmen], as well as the dates of those changes'. So the reviewer recognizes that the 'treason' of the

United Irishmen is not to be too readily accepted in Musgrave's simplistic terms. The *Monthly* concludes that 'in his account of the late horrible disturbances, Mr Plowden displays in general fairness and impartiality', noting that he also takes 'several opportunities of pointing out the mis-statements in Sir Richard Musgrave's memoirs, which are too numerous to allow any person to suppose that they were involuntary'. Not that the public is likely to be misled by Musgrave's propagandist work: 'In Ireland, it may have too successfully attained its object, but it never possessed any credit in this country, and was,' the *Monthly* believes, 'very little read and still less regarded.'[9]

Bristol Library's borrowing register for the early 1800s suggests that Sir Richard's English readership was not quite so negligible. During the first 25 months after publication (from July 1801 to August 1803) the *Rebellions* was borrowed 24 times – for an average borrowing period of nearly three weeks. In eight instances, the book was taken out on the same day that the previous borrower returned it. And even after the *Monthly Review*'s dismissive treatment of Musgrave's work in 1805, Bristol borrowers took out *Rebellions* ten times in the following three years.[10] The sheer bulk of Plowden's three quarto volumes was a deterrent to borrowers. (The complete Plowden was borrowed only twice at Bristol in the first six months after publication, and only nine single volumes were taken out in the first four years.) The *Critical Review* was quick to warn its readers: 'The appearance of Mr Plowden's volume is rather formidable. Imagine to yourself, gentle reader, two quartos, containing respectively 1003 and 1480 pages. The latter indeed, for your greater comfort, is bound in two parts.' The review continues in a tone of studied irony:

> We doubt not that he has omitted, exclusive of advertisements almost as much letter-press of the Dublin Evening Post as he has inserted; that many pamphlets, especially on the treasury side, have not been transcribed; and that he might have added, from the stores of his own mind, many thousand reflections little inferior in importance and profundity to those which at present decorate his annotations.[11]

The *Monthly Review* similarly censured Plowden's prolixity, arguing that he ought 'either to have made his collection of state papers complete, or to have made it more select', and 'only in very particular cases' to have published the parliamentary debates in full. The *State of Ireland* would then have been reduced to 'a fourth of its present bulk'.[12]

Like the *Monthly*, the *Critical Review* deplores the policies of Elizabeth's reign: 'Whatever may be thought of the necessity that Protestantism should be established in Ireland, the means by which it was secured were at all events unjustifiable'.[13] And, again like the *Monthly*, the *Critical* condemns Plowden's attempted extenuation of the 1641 rebellion, complaining that the account of Charles I's reign is so confused that 'no man previously unacquainted with the circumstances, can draw any connected information from his incoherent rhapsody'. The *Critical*'s reviewer is especially indignant at Plowden's failure to do justice to Lord Clarendon.[14] When the *Critical Review* at last reaches Plowden's account of the eighteenth century, it is equally outspoken in its censure of the Irish government's treatment of its own citizens: 'The condition of those people from the reign of Anne to that of his present majesty (we speak the truth boldly since the times have passed by), was more like that of the Spartan Helots, or the negroes of Jamaica, than the subjects of a paternal monarchy, and common sharers of the British constitution.' The reviewer deplores the fact that 'it was thought necessary to degrade three-fourths of the Irish to a state of villenage in order to preserve an ascendancy over the remainder'. But he does admit that under George III 'a continual stream of concessions has flowed in upon Ireland'.[15] While not attempting to conceal its disappointment that what might have been a worthy rejoinder to Musgrave's *Rebellions* turns out be 'no history, but a partial and ill-digested compilation', the *Critical* accords Plowden some credit for his treatment of the 1798 Rebellion:

> We find our author, though visibly inclined to represent the outrages of the magistrates and the military in the strongest light, yet not uncandid enough to suppress all mention of those which were perpetrated by the United Irishmen. In this he certainly has the advantage of sir Richard Musgrave. It is painful to read these records of atrocious retaliation, by which the protestants of Ireland, especially those of the Orange denomination, sullied their acknowledged intrepidity in the cause of the constitution.[16]

The largely dismissive notices of the *Monthly* and C*ritical*, both appearing in June 1805, cannot have helped the sales of Plowden's history. But 18 months earlier, Musgrave's Catholic antagonist had been effectively demolished in a long-running review covering five consecutive issues of the *British Critic* – written (though anonymously)

by Sir Richard himself. The cloak of anonymity enables the reviewer to refer approvingly to his own history:

> Sir Richard Musgrave's History of the Irish Rebellion of 1798 at length, in some measure, opened the eyes of the British nation. His minute detail of the enormities committed *before* as well as during its progress, fortified as it is by such an infallible body of evidence upon oath, and authenticated by testimony of those officers and gentlemen who were eyewitnesses of many of the horrid transactions, has at last given the people of England more just conceptions of the designs of the Irish rebels.[17]

In February 1804, a footnote refers readers to the first volume of Sir Richard's third edition, while in the following month we meet claims that Plowden 'has copied *verbatim*' Sir Richard's account of the origin of the Defenders, where readers 'will find an account of the murders and atrocities of this popish banditti'. And the anonymous reviewer is soon advising his readers that the progress of the 1798 Rebellion

> has been so minutely and so faithfully detailed by Sir R. Musgrave that it cannot be necessary for us to say much upon it. His work is considered authentic by those who witnessed the scenes he describes. There is hardly a fact in his book, which is not vouched by affidavits and state papers in his Appendix.[18]

Before praising his own work, the anonymous Musgrave had begun the *British Critic's* lead review of November 1803 by asserting that Plowden's 'ponderous publication is evidently written to serve the interests of a party' and is 'replete with historical misrepresentations crowded with undeserved panegyrics upon one set of individuals, and with the most unfounded calumnies against the living and dead of another'.[19] Musgrave's object as reviewer is 'to refute Mr Plowden's erroneous positions, to detect his gross misrepresentations, to repel his insinuations, and to give our readers the information we have collected of the causes and objects of the different rebellions in Ireland'.[20] The main charge is one of bias rather than prolixity.

Although the anonymous *British Critic* reviewer is 'aware that Mr Plowden has received all his information relating to "Catholic Ireland" from the most polluted sources', he nevertheless professes surprise that the author should have 'given credit to the gross calumnies which have been reported to him'.[21] More specifically, Plowden is

accused of depicting the British government as 'one uniform and continued system of oppression and cruelty', where the reviewer can find only 'the necessary exertions of power, the indispensable measures of self-preservation'.[22] As reviewer, Musgrave confidently asserts that 'wanton barbarity has never been, at any period, the characteristic feature of the English nation'. He reproaches Plowden for having 'charged the present generation with enormities of which they are incapable', and for accusing 'his majesty's troops and officers with perpetrating barbarities, which no man, who knows the characteristic humanity of a British army, can possibly believe'.[23] It is not only Plowden who strains the reader's credulity. Sir Richard's review, like his *Rebellions*, stresses the continuity of Irish insurrections – even to the extent of noting that the rebellions of 1641, 1798 and 1803 all began on the 23rd of their respective months.[24] Musgrave moves from 'the grand popish confederacy' of Elizabeth's reign, to defending the policy of confiscation as 'the inevitable consequences of the insurrections of the Irish'. For him, the history of Ireland is 'little more than a series of rebellions'.[25] Similarly the intervention of France in Irish affairs during the 1790s has ample precedent: 'From the reign of Elizabeth to the accession of our present monarch, the discontented Catholic party in Ireland have systematically aimed at a separation from England, by the overthrow of the English interest and government; and for that purpose, have maintained a constant connection with some foreign power.' How then, Musgrave asks, 'can any liberal Catholic at this day look back upon the conduct of his ancestors with satisfaction, much less with exultation?'[26]

Plowden had made much of the loyalty of the Catholic Irish to the British crown during the Jacobite crises of 1715 and 1745. But Sir Richard reminds his *British Critic* readers that, according to the Irish House of Commons Journal, Ireland was garrisoned in 1715 by 'seven regiments of cavalry of from six to nine troops each regiment, and twenty-three regiments of infantry of ten companies each, all Protestants or Englishmen'.[27] In Musgrave's judgement, it was leniency, not rigour that destroyed the quiescence of Ireland after the Jacobite scares. The 1782 constitutional concessions are seen as offering 'bold popular offenders' the chance to take up the claims of any disaffected party, or 'to bring forward any imaginary grievance, of which there never can be a want in a free state'. These were the men 'who have weakened that ascendancy, whether English or Protestant, to which we do not hesitate to affirm Ireland owed its tranquillity, from the [1688] Revolution to the year 1782'.[28] And in view of the

conciliatory policy – 'what may more properly be styled the conceding system' – Musgrave cannot see why Plowden should insist on rehearsing the post-Revolution penal code, since it had largely been repealed under George III. As Lord Clare had said in the Irish House of Lords in 1793: 'Let modern philosophers and metaphysicians, who exclaim against this code, as subverting the immutable principles of sentiment and fraternity, and the imprescriptable rights of man', remember that Irish Protestants after the 1688 Revolution were 'a colony settled in an enemy's country.' Their numbers were less than a quarter of the total population, and after the experience of the seventeenth century, they could not 'stand their ground, unless by disarming the enemies who surrounded them'. Clare quickly explained that he did not mean 'stripping them of offensive weapons', but rather that 'it was necessary to strip the natives of Ireland of all political power'.[29]

Musgrave's recipe, three years after the Union, was for Britain to 'keep power in her own hands, until Ireland, by the cordial attachment of all her inhabitants to the throne and government, shall cease to give her any more fears upon that head, than our countrymen of Yorkshire and Cornwall'.[30] Meanwhile Sir Richard dismisses the White-boys as 'a Popish banditti', and decides that in all the various insurrections in Ireland – 'White-boys and Right-boys, hearts of Oak and Hearts of Steel, Defenders and United Irishmen' – lurking under 'plausible and popular grievances, the secret design and real object had been always concealed'. Thus while 'the rabble and their inferior leaders have shown themselves, the principal contrivers and fomenters have been themselves concealed, and generally have escaped detention and justice'.[31] Unsurprisingly, Musgrave assigns a crucial role to the Catholic Committee, which from its first formation 'made an alliance with every contentious individual, avowed republican, city orator, and desperate adventurer'. The United Irishmen's declared object, amplified by Musgrave's parenthesis, was 'to promote a brotherhood of affection (for the purposes of insurrection and treason) amongst Irishmen of every religious persuasion'. The newly founded society immediately embraced 'Dissenters and Catholics, deists, Free-thinkers, No-thinkers and other Protestants of this description'. And the *British Critic*'s readers are reminded that Wolfe Tone, as agent to the Catholic Committee, was the 'father' of the Society of United Irishmen, and 'the composer of some of the *most admired* manifestoes that issued from both'.[32]

Plowden had unwisely repeated the unfounded rumour that Orangemen had pledged themselves to 'exterminate all the Catholics

of Ireland'. Musgrave is swift with his denial: 'A more unjust, malicious, or unfounded calumny never was invented! Nor can we sufficiently express our indignation and astonishment that an English barrister should have so far suffered himself to be imposed upon by his informers'. In refutation, Sir Richard offers the fifth rule of the Orange Society: 'that no person *do persecute or upbraid* anyone on account of his religious opinions; but that he will, on the contrary, be aiding and assisting every loyal subject of every description'. Loyalty, as viewed by Orangemen, would doubtless be in the eye of the beholder. Sir Richard Musgrave took leave of his *British Critic* readers and of the work he had been reviewing, in characteristically derogatory terms: 'As a literary work it is beneath criticism; and as an history it would have been below notice, were it not unfortunately calculated to do infinite mischief to *that class* of readers, to whose feelings it was written, and whose errors and prejudices it may confirm'.[33]

The daunting bulk of Plowden's *State of Ireland*, and the rapidity with which it was effectively trounced in the *British Critic* by an expert antagonist with an axe to grind, help to explain Plowden's poor reception – especially as the *British Critic* got in first.[34] But the antijacobin press was not yet finished with the Catholic response to Musgrave. In 1804, Sir Richard published his *British Critic* review in an expanded form, though still anonymously, as *Strictures upon an historical review of the state of Ireland by Francis Plowden Esq*.[35] Musgrave's expanded text, which ran to 233 pages including 27 appendices, is directed not only against Plowden's *State of Ireland* but against his *Postliminious preface* in which (says the now barely anonymous Musgrave) 'he has done the writer the honour of abusing him, in company with some of the most exalted individuals of the present times'.[36] But what most clearly shows the value of Musgrave to the antijacobin camp is that, between September 1805 and July 1807, the *Antijacobin Review* itself devotes a remarkable 99 pages, spread over six issues, to a review of *Strictures* – thus exceeding even the 84 pages the *British Critic* allotted to Sir Richard's original review of Plowden's work.[37]

The *Antijacobin* for September 1805 began its lead review of Musgrave's *Strictures* by telling its readers that 'for nearly two centuries and a half, the Irish Roman Catholics have endeavoured to separate their native country from England, and to banish or extirpate such of the English as had settled in it'. Ever since France had become formidable under Richelieu, Mazarin and Colbert, the *Antijacobin* insists, the Irish have sought French alliances and protection, and 'at no period have they manifested so much zeal to do so, as since, by the

repeal of the penal laws, they have been admitted to a full enjoyment of civil liberty, and to a considerable share of political power'. As befits an antijacobin publication, the reviewer is anxious to coalesce Irish Catholic separatists with French Jacobins:

> As soon as the French republicans formed a design of subverting the British empire, they looked to the alliance of their steady and faithful allies, the Irish Roman Catholics, and accordingly, the rebellious conduct of another Popish banditti called the Defenders, was formidable, not only in many counties of Ireland, but in its metropolis, so early as the year 1792.[38]

The reviewer, following Musgrave, is satisfied that 'a Popish rebellion formed by the Defenders' had existed 'three or four years before the founding of the United Irishmen'. But it is to the second report of the Secret Committee of the House of Lords (1797) that the *Antijacobin* appeals for corroboration that 'the leaders and directors of these associations (meaning the united Irishmen) are now, and have been for some time past, anxiously engaged in uniting with them a class of men, who had formerly disturbed the peace of this country, by acts of outrage, robbery and murder, under the appellation of *defenders*'.[39]

Before considering the text of Musgrave's *Strictures*, the *Antijacobin* quotes, from the report of the Secret Committee of the House of Commons (1797), the claim that the Defenders and United Irishmen 'held forth Catholic emancipation and parliamentary reform as the ostensible objects of their union; but their real purposes were to separate Great Britain from Ireland, and to subvert the present constitution'. And, noticing Plowden's professed intention in his *Postliminious preface* to write 'a fair, impartial and authentic' history of Ireland, the *Antijacobin* finds it, on the contrary, 'founded on the grossest perversions of historic truth, as its main object is evidently to condemn the religious, moral and political principles of Protestants'.[40] The prospect of the Attorney-General prosecuting Plowden for what the *Antijacobin* calls 'so gross a libel' had proved unnecessary: 'Public contempt, mingled with indignation, has been a sufficient punishment for him, as he is universally pointed at by the finger of scorn. The lion feeds not on carcasses.' The journal's editors nevertheless justify the space they have devoted to *Strictures* by stressing the need to warn the British public how far conciliatory policies towards Catholics are against its true interests. The review concludes: 'Nothing that we have ever read is so well calculated to attain that end as this work, which is a most

excellent dissertation on the history of Ireland'. And (unlike Plowden's *State of Ireland*) it 'has the merit of being very cheap, for it is in a small type'.[41]

The *Antijacobin*'s review of *Strictures* devotes more than one-third of its allotted 99 pages to re-printing extracts from the text, besides numerous shorter excerpts. The reviewer approves Musgrave's refusal to follow Plowden through all 'the early petty broils of a barbarous province; the incidents of which compiled from a selection of the Irish monkish annalists, are therein recorded in a most fatiguing detail'. And the reviewer applauds Sir Richard's defence of the English colonists of Henry II's reign from charges of cruelty and barbarity towards the native Irish; agreeing with Musgrave: 'that a gentleman possessing the proud and generous feelings of our countrymen, should give credit to the falsehoods of bigotted Irish annalists against our ancestors, is as astonishing as it is preposterous'.[42] The reviewer reproduces 'the very able defence' of Elizabeth's Irish policy by 'this ingenious writer, to whom the public are much indebted for vindicating the Protestant State against the invectives of its very uncandid and disingenuous opponent'.[43] The passage cited from *Strictures* says of the principal rebellions of Elizabeth's reign that 'the source from whence those waters of bitterness flowed, and have continued to flow, was religious bigotry'.[44]

The *Antijacobin* sometimes sees the need to amplify the text of *Strictures*, as when it draws comparisons with the 1798 Rebellion. The reviewer gives his own account of how the Papal bulls of Elizabeth's reign provoked the rebellion in Munster, where the animosity between the rival Catholic families was overcome by 'the false zeal of Romish superstition, and their deep-rooted hatred to the Protestant state' – thus leading to a Spanish invasion. A footnote explains: 'We have been circumstantial in delineating this invasion, as the incidents attending it resemble strongly those which took place on the descent of the French under Humbert.'[45] The reviewer also sees similarities between the 1640s and 1798:

> In the year 1644, the confederate Catholics assembled at Kilkenny, prescribed an oath of association, and the Popish priests were ordered to exhibit it to their flocks. The same took place in 1689; and it is well known that the black, or bloody oath, enjoining the extirpation of heretics, was taken in, and previous to, the year 1798.

And oaths of allegiance were disregarded in the 1640s 'as much as in the year 1798, because by the fundamental principles of their religion,

enjoined by their general councils, they are considered as null and void, when taken to a Protestant state'.[46] The theme of continuity is further pursued in the *Antijacobin*'s review for June 1806. Citing Plowden's earlier work, *The Case Stated* (1791), the reviewer quotes the author's claim, destined to echo down the coming decades: 'If anyone says, or pretends to insinuate, that the modern Roman Catholics who are the objects of the late bounty of Parliament, differ in one iota from their predecessors, he is either deceiving himself, or he wishes to deceive others. *Semper eadem* is more emphatically descriptive of our religion, than of our jurisprudence.'[47] The *Antijacobin* tendentiously applies Plowden's insistence on Catholic doctrinal and devotional consistency to Catholic political objectives.

The *Antijacobin*'s reviewer presses home his advantage, by attacking one of Plowden's sources – O'Sullivan's history of sixteenth-century Irish rebellions. Plowden 'with his usual dullness' quotes this Irish historian, who is 'as noted for falsity as fanaticism', to counter the claim that 'superstitious bigotry' was the main cause of all the Elizabethan rebellions. Yet O'Sullivan 'ostentatiously boasts' that during Tyrone's rebellion 'the Irish Papists submitted the following question to the Spanish Universities of Salamanca and Vallalodid: "Whether an Irish Papist may obey or assist his Protestant Sovereign".' The *Antijacobin* triumphantly records the universities' answer:

> 1st. Since the Earl of Tyrone undertook the war for religion, and by the Pope's approbation, it was as meritorious to aid him against the heretic, as to fight against the Turk.
> 2nd. That it was a mortal sin any way to assist the English against him; and that those who did so, could neither have absolution, nor salvation, without deserting the heretics and repenting of so great a crime.

The reviewer concedes that in 1791 the English Catholics published a condemnation of the doctrines proclaimed by the seventeenth-century universities, insisting that such were not the tenets of the Catholic Church. And although the Catholic Committee similarly denounced the doctrines in 1792, the *Antijacobin* retorts that the doctrines are 'strictly enjoined as articles of faith by many of their general councils; and they have been uniformly carried into practice in all the Irish rebellions'.[48] When (in the reviewer's words) 'the Popish cabal sent a deputation to King James [I], to complain of grievances which they did not feel', the King chided the Catholics for sending their children to

'seminaries of treason', and warned them that 'your Irish priests teach such grounds of doctrines, as you cannot follow with a safe conscience, but you must cast off your loyalty to your King'. An editorial footnote asks what James I would think 'at seeing a college established and richly endowed at Maynooth, for the education of Popish priests'.[49]

The *Antijacobin*'s reviewer of *Strictures* enlists a seventeenth-century historian of his own choice, citing the work of Sir John Davies, whom Plowden had himself quoted. Davies contrasts the King's title of Sovereign Lord with the real state of Ireland:

> If there be two third parts of that country wherein he cannot punish treasons, murders or thefts, *unless he send an army to do it*; if the jurisdiction of his ordinary courts doth not extend into those parts to protect the people from wrong and oppression; if he have no certain revenue, no escheats or forfeitures out of the same, I cannot justly say that such a country *is wholly conquered*.[50]

The reviewer also quotes, with evident relish, Sir John's depiction of the manners and morals which the English acquired by assimilating the habits of the Irish: 'I omit their common repudiation of their wives, their promiscuous generation of children, their neglect of lawful matrimony, their uncleanness in apparel, diet and lodging, and their contempt and scorn of all things necessary for the civil life of man.'[51] The *Antijacobin* is soon focusing on the reign of Charles I, since 'no period of Irish history affords such strong indications of that deep rooted dissatisfaction, which is inseparable from popery under a Protestant state'.[52] Brazenly warning its readers that Plowden exhibits 'the intemperate zeal of a bigoted partizan', the *Antijacobin* quotes Musgrave's ironic reminder that the *State of Ireland* dismisses all the 'reputable historians' of Stuart Ireland 'on account of their party prejudice', that 'Dr Warner only can be trusted, whose book is very rare in Ireland; and therefore, although it contradicts every one of Mr Plowden's favourite positions, yet his Irish readers have his full permission to consult it, on account of its scarcity'.[53] The reviewer ends his July 1806 instalment by quoting Musgrave's justification of Charles II's harsh treatment of Irish Catholics as 'measures of self-preservation, which the whole tenor of their conduct, since the reign of Elizabeth, had rendered indispensable for the safety of the Protestants of Ireland, and the existence of the English power in that country'.[54]

A year and 27 pages of review later, the *Antijacobin* finally reached that part of *Strictures* dealing with the reign of George III. The

reviewer re-visits Plowden's 'false account' of the origin and progress of the White Boys, noting that 'Sir Richard Musgrave in his History of the Irish rebellion, gives a minute and authenticated account of them'.[55] Plowden had quoted what he claimed was part of a report by a commission, instituted to enquire into the causes of the White Boy disturbances, which concluded that 'the authors of these riots consisted indiscriminately of persons of different persuasions, and that no mark of disaffection appeared in any of these people'.[56] Musgrave's comment on this extract appears as a footnote: 'I can find no such report, but have found *this paragraph verbatim* in the Whitehall Evening Post, of the 4th of May, 1762, which paragraph was no doubt written in Ireland, and sent over here for insertion, by some abettors of this insurrection, in order to deceive the people of England; *a practice very systematically pursued of late years*.'[57] The *Antijacobin* turns easily from White Boys to Defenders, explaining that the former were 'exactly similar to the Defenders, for they were exclusively Papists, they were bound together by oaths; they deprived the Protestants of arms, against whom their vengeance was directed'.[58] What linked the two groups of rebels was the power of priests over the laity, which in 1798 was 'evinced in a most extraordinary manner' when Catholic priests could motivate Irish peasants, 'naturally timid and unacquainted with the use of arms, to face, and to bear patiently, the fire of musketry and cannon'. The reviewer asked 'whether such powerful influence was not sufficient to enable them to check the destructive progress of the Defenders, who were terrific so early as the year 1789, and who became afterwards subservient to the United Irishmen in 1792; and whether they could not finally have prevented the explosion of the rebellion in 1798?' Their ability to do so was all the more probable, 'as they learn all the secrets of their flock in the confession box', and could not therefore have been 'unacquainted with all the particulars of a conspiracy, formed with deliberation for the destruction of the empire, and which the conspirators had been many years concerting'. The reviewer clinches his argument by citing the fourth Lateran Council (1215), and the advice given by Cardinal Bellarmine (1542–1621) that 'if treason be known in a confession, he may give notice of it to a pious and Catholic prince, but not to a heretic'. The *Antijacobin* comments, in convoluted syntax:

> If our gracious Sovereign had been a Papist, the Irish priests might have informed him that a treasonable conspiracy had been formed

> for the destruction of his empire, with the aid of the French government; a negotiation for whose aid was begun, even while Robespierre was at its head, but being an alien to his Holiness, they could not do so.[59]

The basis of the improbable alliance between Catholic and Jacobin had thus, to the *Antijacobin*'s satisfaction, been laid bare.

The same journal's promotion of Musgrave and demolition of Plowden were not confined to its serialized review of *Strictures* between September 1805 and July 1807. Late in 1802 it had published Sir Richard's letter, replying to reviews of his *Rebellions* in the *Monthly Review* and *Monthly Magazine*. The latter monthly, with its Unitarian editor Richard Phillips, was a particular target of the *Antijacobin*, which described the rival periodical as 'a vehicle for the sentiments of all who are disaffected to our establishments, both in church and state'.[60] Two years later the *Antijacobin* reviewed Plowden's *State of Ireland* for a dozen pages in a single issue,[61] while devoting a further 40-odd pages in three successive issues to 'Strictures on the Postliminious Preface', provided by a correspondent – almost certainly Musgrave himself.[62] This amounts to more than 150 pages of the *Antijacobin* between November 1804 and July 1807 devoted to the rubbishing of Plowden; to which must be added more than 80 pages of Musgrave's own review in the *British Critic*, and the enlarged version of that review published in pamphlet form as *Strictures*. Nor is that all. John Gifford, editor of the *Antijacobin*, published his three-volume biography of Pitt (1809), which unsurprisingly gave renewed currency to Musgrave's version of events.[63] Bristol subscription library's records show only two borrowings of *Rebellions* in 1810, and none of Plowden, but six borrowings of Gifford's third volume. Plowden had retaliated in 1805 with *An historical letter to Sir R. Musgrave* in reply to the 'Strictures on the Postliminious Preface'.[64] And in 1809, the year of Gifford's life of Pitt, a second edition of Plowdens' *Historical Survey of the State of Ireland* appeared. But copyright difficulties and a threatened libel action curtailed the new edition's circulation. In 1811 he would publish an account of the first decade of the new century – *Ireland since the Union*. (See chapter 5 below) His *State of Ireland* appeared in a new edition with a shorter title in 1812, and then not again until 1831.[65] The well co-ordinated and sustained Ascendancy counter-attack in the pro-establishment literary reviews had proved conspicuously effective.

4
Contrary Voices

In his sustained campaign against Francis Plowden's *Historical survey of the state of Ireland* (1803), Sir Richard Musgrave fired salvoes at two pamphlets published in the same year as Plowden. They are Edward Hay's *History of the insurrection of the county of Wexford* and James Gordon's *History of the rebellion in Ireland*.[1] Musgrave thought Hay's account 'as strongly under the influence of Popish bigotry as that of Mr Plowden', and equally 'libellous of the government, the magistrates and the king's troops'. Gordon, although a clergyman of the Established Church, is thought by Musgrave 'to be imbued with republican principles, and the tenor of his book strengthens the suspicion'. Gordon kept a school in County Wexford 'in such a state of obscurity and retirement, that it is universally well known he was ignorant of the events which passed within a short distance of his residence'. This isolation, adds Musgrave, led Gordon to collect his information about the Rebellion 'from the hearsay evidence of low obscure people, who it is presumed were disaffected, as his book contains many gross perversions of the truth'.[2]

The Rev. James Gordon was not as insulated from the actual events of the Rebellion as Sir Richard suggests. His three youngest children fell into the hands of the rebels, though they 'received no injury', while his two eldest sons fought as yeomen against the Wexford rebels, but 'escaped without a wound'. Thus, Gordon explains, the only loss to his family was the destruction of their property: 'One part, indeed, of my loss of property was grievous – books, which I cannot for a time replace, necessary for the finishing of my historico-geographical work, and manuscripts which never can be replaced.'[3] In the preface to the second edition (1803) of his *History of the rebellion*, Gordon presents himself 'as an historian, not as a polemic'. But he admits that 'as I am

not only a protestant, but a protestant priest, I have no right to expect that I should be admitted as judge between catholics and protestants'.[4] Gordon nevertheless thinks he must have achieved some degree of impartiality as the first (1801) edition of his *History* had 'given equal and high offence to the violent blockheads on both sides'. He decides that the main charge against the first edition is that he had not described loyalists of whatever complexion as 'free from every infirmity of human nature, and indeed with every virtue, particularly those of clemency and courage'. And that he had not depicted the rebels as 'destitute of every virtue, and though cowards, yet by some strange fatality, opposing themselves in such manner to the swords and bullets of the armed saints, as to have been slaughtered in thousands in every encounter'.[5] Gordon finds that loyalists demand a history recording 'no error committed by any actor on the right side of the question or in favour of the righteous cause'.[6]

Gordon contrasts his own approach with that of his critics, in a thinly disguised characterization of Musgrave's *Rebellions*:

> To write a book determinedly and exclusively in favour of either party, especially the victorious and ruling party, is an easy piece of business. An author with such a purpose will feel no dearth of story, style or phrase. The fiery stream of volcanic matter will be more copiously around him. The danger is that he may be overwhelmed by the lava.[7]

More specifically, Gordon proposes to leave Musgrave's 'other excellencies to the sagacity of his critics', preferring to comment only on Sir Richard's 'zeal and industry'. The author's zeal, Gordon expects, will be recognized 'by the catholics themselves, after due perusal of his quarto'; and as for his industry: 'I think his volume is *a weighty* (*I do not say heavy*) proof. I apprehend that it is already beginning to sink by its own weight into oblivion.'[8] Meanwhile Gordon refers readers to one of his own appendices for 'a very slight specimen' of Musgrave's mistakes.[9] In spite of its formidable array of seemingly supportive documents, Musgrave's *Rebellions* is 'evidently a party production calculated for the political and religious fervour of the day'. A close examination, Gordon suggests, will reveal Musgrave's work as 'founded on garbled information, garbled affidavits and interlarded with fiction'. Recalling that, unlike evidence in a court of law, the signatories of affidavits cannot be cross-examined, Gordon concludes: 'If a history of this period could be written on the croppy side of the question, in the same

spirit as that by the baronet, and with a like support of a powerful faction, a picture of the rebellion would be established directly the reverse of his, founded on affidavits in a similar way.'[10]

As for his own *History*, Gordon recognizes that his attempted impartiality may have misfired. Although he denies that he has 'under the insidiously assumed mask of candour and impartiality, made the most artfully malicious insinuations against the catholics of Ireland', he concedes that Catholics may be correct in thinking that his version is 'more injurious to their interests than that of Sir Richard Musgrave; which, on account of its unqualified aspersions, nobody, they say believes'.[11] Gordon can scarcely be said to be favouring Catholics when he states:

> No fact is more certain than that the common people of the catholic persuasion, in all parts *at least* of the county of Wexford, whenever they had hope of success in the rebellion, uniformly declared that no other form of worship than their own must be permitted, and that God had never intended that any other should have place.

Gordon criticizes the imposition of penance 'if a catholic happens to go, even once in his life, and even from mere curiosity, to a protestant place of worship'. He also deplores the withdrawal of Catholic children from a charity school in Wexford, after their priest reprimanded their attendance at a charity sermon.[12]

One sees why Gordon felt the need to deny being an Orangeman, and to explain that 'having eight times taken the oath of allegiance, and been fully sensible that the support of my family depended on the continuance of the established government, I could not conceive any mode by which I could be more firmly attached to it'. Yet his own sons had joined the Orange order, assuring him that 'their system is purely defensive, and that to give even the smallest insult to any person on account of difference in religion is contrary to their oaths'. Gordon nonetheless makes clear that he does not excuse 'the excesses of the lower or higher orders of orange-men, more than of any other denominations'. And he insists that those Orangemen who have 'infringed the laws of heaven and of their country, must be regarded as degrading the majesty of the monarch, and the sanctity of the religion which they have pretended to maintain'.[13] Admitting that 'a man cannot easily know himself', Gordon does not consider himself an enemy to Catholics, particularly as he 'always felt as much distress of mind from

the unjust sufferings of catholics as of protestants'. Although he does not regard Catholic Emancipation as imminent, he thinks that, when it comes, 'their political emancipation will operate in Irish catholics, in course of time, another emancipation from an incomparably more ignoble bondage, the thraldom of the mind in bonds of ignorance and superstition'. This is hardly less condescending than Musgrave, though Gordon adds that the present 'bondage' would be less damaging if it did not include 'such an odium of other religions, that a catholic should be supposed contaminated by even his accidental presence at their ceremonies'.[14]

As an Anglican priest, Gordon disapproves 'of the rubrick of catholicity, of a popish hierarchy, of doctrines and dogmas attributed to those who exclusively arrogate the vain title of catholics', but he is entirely in favour of the repeal of the penal laws. He thinks 'the speedy annihilation of the residue of those disqualifying laws' would be a measure 'fraught with solid advantage to all parties in this as yet distracted country.'[15] Yet his underlying pessimism surfaces, when he decides that 'so inveterately rooted are the prejudices of religious antipathy in the minds of the lower classes of Irish Romanists,' that in any civil war arising from causes unconnected with religion, 'not all the efforts of their gentry, or even of their priests, to the contrary, could, if I am not exceedingly mistaken, restrain them from converting it into a religious quarrel.[16] Gordon appeals to the *Narrative of Killala* to support the view that the Catholic clergy's self-destructive action in allying with French Deists can be explained by 'the almost total dependence of the clergy of Ireland upon their people for the means of subsistence'.[17] Thus, far from the Catholic clergy controlling their flock, the reality was the very opposite:

> Voluntary contribution, the main resource of the priest, must depend on his popularity. 'Live with me, and live as I do. Oppress me not with superior learning or refinement. Take thankfully what I choose to give you, and earn by compliance with my political creed and conduct.' Such, when justly translated, is the language of the Irish cottager to his priest.[18]

According to the same *Narrative*, the French invaders decreed that all provisions seized or offered were to be 'punctually paid for in drafts on the future directory of Ireland'.[19] What Gordon calls 'this mode of public regulated plunder' might (he suggests) have been deliberately adopted by the French Directory for fear the invasion should prove

abortive, in which case Catholic Ireland 'they might think ought to be obliged to sustain the expences of its own revolution'.[20] Gordon is sure that 'one of the chief incitements to the unfortunate peasantry to repair to the standard of the invaders, was the thirst for private pillage, the indulgence of which no efforts of their more civilized associates could prevent'. And quoting freely from the *Narrative* (as Musgrave had done), Gordon notes that 'the miserable bigotry of the lower classes of Irish Romanists was very inconsistent with the notions of their French allies'.[21]

Gordon also follows Musgrave and the *Antijacobin Review* in objecting to the allegedly insulting tone of Dr Hussey's pastoral letter to the clergy of his diocese, which 'treats the protestants with great insolence, as a contemptible sect which must soon have an end'.[22] Nevertheless Gordon has the grace to retract words he had earlier used of the 1792 Catholic petition to the Crown: 'In my first edition I pronounced this *a petition surprisingly fraught with misrepresentation*. Though penal statutes against Catholics had lain dormant, yet I think that expression unjust, and therefore I expunge it.'[23] Again (like Musgrave) Gordon gives short shrift to the United Irishmen

> whose profound conspiracy, after a long, obstinate and doubtful struggle with the government of the kingdom, was forced in the end, by the vigilance and vigour of administration, feebly to explode in partial, irregular and easily conquerable insurrections, instead of a universal and well organized rebellion, the means proposed by the chiefs to overturn the constitution.[24]

He sees the creation of the Dublin National Guard in 1792 as reflecting the United Irishmen's early determination to resort to military force. And although he regards Archibald Hamilton Rowan as 'a gentleman of very respectable family and fortune, of a most amiable character, and the warmest philanthropy', Gordon adds the caution that 'a zealous philanthropy, without a clear judgment and steady resolution to direct it, is pernicious instead of useful to society'.[25] Those who, like Thomas Addis Emmet, 'might vainly hope, that without much bloodshed, a new government might be established of so liberal a nature as to leave no shackles on industry or merit', were (says Gordon) 'egregiously mistaken in the nature of the instruments, on which they in great measure depended for the accomplishment of their scheme'.[26]

Gordon nevertheless selects 1795 as the date when United Irishmen – 'this knot of reforming politicians' – went beyond the dissemination

of Paine's *Rights of Man*, and assumed 'with little disguise, a revolutionary cast'. He contrasts the 1791 oath of the society and its expressed aim of attaining 'an impartial and adequate representation of the Irish nation in parliament' with the amended wording of the later oath: 'to obtain an equal, full and adequate representation of *all* the people of Ireland'. The removal of all further reference to parliament from the 1794 version of the oath persuades Gordon that what was now aimed at was not merely parliamentary reform, but 'a total overthrow of the existing system of government, and the erection of the Irish nation into an independent republic, unconnected with Britain'; and that this was 'from the beginning an object with some of the original framers of the society'.[27] Cited in support is the famous letter from Wolfe Tone to his associates in Belfast, in which he admits that the statement of his views goes 'so far as in the present juncture it may be advisable to publish it'. Such views (Tone admits) 'certainly fall short of the truth, but truth itself must sometimes condescend to temporise'. The extract ends: 'I have not said one word that looks like a wish for separation, though I give it to you and your friends as my decided opinion that such an event would be a regeneration to this country.'[28]

Despite such damning evidence of dissimulation, Gordon does generally distinguish between the earlier and later aims of United Irishmen, and (unlike Musgrave) recognizes the significance of the year 1795 and the recall of Fitzwillam, noting the paradox that the noble lord (a disciple of Edmund Burke) was 'a warm friend to the Romanists, and a bitter enemy to the French republicans, who had renounced their communion, and yet on whom, notwithstanding, the Romanists of Ireland depended in great measure for the exaltation of their church by their assistance in a revolution.[29] Gordon also recognized the unpopularity of the war against republican France, which he describes as 'a ministerial measure adopted apparently without reason, and so highly condemned by many in the nation as to add prodigiously to the number of malcontents in both the British Kingdoms'.[30] The combined effect of the suspension of *habeas corpus* and the passing of the Insurrection Act, both in 1796, is recorded:

> Considerable numbers of gentlemen, or persons in respectable situations of life, were arrested on private informations of their engagement in the conspiracy, and lodged in prison, many for a great length of time without opportunity of trial. Many districts in the northern counties were proclaimed, and numbers of the lower classes of men sent on board the king's navy.[31]

More significantly, Gordon has harsh things to say about the conduct of the British army in Ireland.

In the preface to his *History*, Gordon observes that, if he wished to see the destruction of the British Empire, he would 'boldly, in defiance of the Searcher of Hearts, who sees my thoughts, declare that the army of his Britannic majesty is so perfectly modeled and admirably officered, that it neither requires, nor could admit any improvement'.[32] And he soon complains of 'the rapacious insolence of the soldiery' which had been 'very unwisely overlooked, or not sufficiently restrained' in the first years of the French war. The conduct of the troops, he notes with studied understatement, was 'certainly not well calculated for the promotion of affectionate sentiments toward administration, in the lower classes of the people'. Among the practices particularly disruptive in rural communities, Gordon instances 'the marches of the troops on change of quarters, the horses of the farmers and peasants pressed for the carriage of baggage' – especially over 'unreasonable distances'.[33] In the closing pages of his *History* Gordon, when seeking to account for the 'small portion of rancour' among the western compared with the south-eastern insurgents, Gordon reverts to the depredations of the British military. He records that, in the western territories:

> those rigorous methods had not been practised, which government had been forced elsewhere to authorise for the disorganization of the united conspiracy; for surely the free-quartering of soldiers, the burning of houses, and the infliction of torture to extract confession, together with the unauthorised insults committed by mistaken or pretended zeal for loyalty, as croppings, pitch-cappings, and half-hangings, must whether necessary or not, whether deserved or not, be expected to kindle a spirit of revenge in the sufferers and their party.[34]

One begins to see why Musgrave regarded Gordon as an antagonist rather than an ally. Gordon claims that both Catholics and Protestants regarded his book 'as a hostile publication', and tried to discourage its sale, while Musgrave boasted of having sold nearly 4000 copies of his *Rebellions*. Gordon retorts: 'All productions absurdly violent or in favour of a predominant party, have in the fervour of the moment a quick sale, and are soon forgotten; while works of real merit have a contrary course.'[35] The implied prediction of the comparative fortunes of his own history and Musgrave's version was to prove woefully wide of the mark.

Edward Hay records that his family had been established in Ireland since Henry II, when they were allotted 'a knight's share of lands in the southern part of the county of Wexford'. There they remained until the 1641 rebellion, when they were dispossessed. Born of Catholic parents, and educated on the Continent, Hay tells us: 'I returned to my native soil fully sensible of my civil degradation as a catholic'[36] He became a delegate from County Wexford to the Catholic General Committee, which drew up the 1792 petition to the Crown for redress of grievances. Hay comments: 'In consequence of royal interposition, by the king's gracious recommendation, the parliament of Ireland (which almost unanimously rejected a petition of the Catholics in 1792) was induced considerably to extend their privileges in 1793.' Hay notes that 'the erection of a statue of the king was voted as a monument of catholic gratitude', but that 'illiberal and calumnious outcries raised against the conduct and intentions of the catholic body' prevented the raising of a subscription.[37] In 1795, after Fitzwilliam's recall, Hay as 'the chosen delegate of protestants as well as catholics' took a petition (reputedly containing 22,251 signatures) to London, where he had 'the honour to present it, along with my brother delegates, to his majesty at a public levee at St James's'. This met with 'a most gracious reception', and Hay allegedly declined an invitation to become a member of political societies 'both in England and Ireland'.[38]

The trigger for Edward Hay's publication of *History of the Wexford insurrection* was Musgrave's assertion that Hay was 'actively concerned in the rebellion'.[39] The *History*, published in Dublin in 1803, was prefaced by *An authentic detail of the extravagant and inconsistent conduct of Sir Richard Musgrave*, in which Hay reports an interview with Musgrave on 28 May 1802. According to Hay, Sir Richard 'not only expressed the most perfect conviction of his error, but that he would by every means in his power retract his former opinion, and give me every satisfaction I required'.[40] Hay prints the text of a letter he wrote to Sir Richard on the day after the interview, attaching a memorandum stating the circumstances of Lord Edward Fitzgerald's arrest, Hay's part in which 'had been misrepresented, and by the basest misconstruction tortured into falsehood'. Illegally imprisoned, Hay tells us, he obtained a writ of *habeas corpus*, which was set aside through the suborned evidence of 'a murderer'. He was eventually exonerated after an inquisition by the Wexford magistrates 'exceeding in its severity, anything we read of in foreign countries'. Anxious

to explain that he makes no assertion 'that is not confirmed by undeniable authority', Hay adds:

> My health was much impaired by a confinement on board a sloop that was twice condemned during the insurrection, as totally unfit to confine any person; afterward she was sunk for a month within a foot of her deck, then pumped out, and on the same day I was without trial or inquiry, put on board along with those who had been tried and sentenced to transportation, where the straw was left in the hold that had the benefit of a month's steeping.[41]

The interest of the *Authentic detail* lies in the record of Musgrave's response to this correspondence. Hay prints a letter from Sir Richard to the editor of the *Sun*, which appeared on 3 November 1802 and contained the surprising claim 'that no person whatsoever has succeeded in invalidating the authenticity of my history in any one occurrence related in it; and I defy any person to do so'.[42] Hay challenged Musgrave in a statement he paid to insert in the *Dublin Journal* on 22 November 1802. The editor declined to publish it, leaving it to appear in the *Dublin Evening Post* on the 23rd. Recalling Sir Richard's promise to remedy the false imputation of Hay's active involvement in the Rebellion, reiterated after the baronet's recovery from illness in the presence of a third party, Hay observes: 'However, he thought proper afterwards, in the most unaccountable manner, *to break his promise*, alledging that *his friends would not permit him to keep it*, and still persists in propagating the slander against me by its unwarranted publication'. The *Dublin Journal* did print Musgrave's protest against 'the general and unqualified abuse which Mr Hay utters against my History'. Sir Richard adds: 'The Monthly Magazine and the Critical and Monthly Review, and many other publications accessible to the Irish Jacobins, have done the like; but neither he nor they have ventured to attack my veracity in any one substantive point or occurrence; and I again defy them to do so.'[43] Musgrave adheres to the view that Hay must have been a rebel, since he was chosen to conduct the prisoner, Captain McManus of the Antrim Regiment, through territory where 'numberless rebels flying from Vinegar-hill were scattered over the country'. Hay counters by reminding Musgrave that it was Lord Kingsborough who gave him the safe-conduct mission: 'Are we to suppose that Lord Kingsborough would have made choice of a disloyal man, to carry this measure into effect?'[44]

It is easy to see why Hay regarded the misrepresentation of this minor incident as more than one of the 'trifling points' in which Musgrave admitted possible error. Apart from seeking to defend his own honour, Hay complains that his antagonist 'feels no sort of compunction at abusing and reviling a whole community, some individually, all indiscriminately, with an illiberality becoming the most rancorous and barbarous ages of persecution, denominating all not of his sentiments, or who oppose his extravagant statement, JACOBINS'.[45] Introducing his main narrative, Hay argues that 'no adherent of either of the contending parties in this unhappy country, can in justification feel himself authorized to assert that his own party was perfectly in the right, and the other egregiously in the wrong'. He hopes that 'if the zealots could be induced calmly to listen to the melancholy tales of enormity that can unfortunately be told of both parties, they might be prevailed upon to relax a little in their prejudices'.[46] He himself intends to 'condemn the bad actions of catholics as much if not more than those of any other religious persuasion'.[47]

How far can Hay's narrative be said to match his aim of writing 'a fair and impartial account' that can 'operate as a balm to heal the wounds of animosity'?[48] He recognizes the reality and baleful consequences of religious prejudice, which is 'so inculcated even in infancy that it is scarcely to be eradicated by any future conviction or experience, however evident its mischief and absurdity'.[49] Commenting on the 'melancholy reflexion' that a child should be 'reared and educated with the belief that the great majority of his countrymen have vowed his destruction', Hay declares that he himself would not remain a Catholic 'one single hour' if his church held the principles attributed to it. But he knows that Catholics 'abhor and detest the principles that prejudice has thought proper to attribute to them'. He concedes that 'history furnishes too many dreadful examples of the shocking effects of RELIGIOUS BIGOTRY; but it is the misapplication of religion and not its essential principles that urge inordinate fury'.[50] More contentiously, Hay points to the Gordon riots of 1780 as a recent reminder of the Protestants' own persecuting tradition.[51] Well might Hay admit: 'I cannot hope to please PARTIZANS OF ANY PERSUASION.' But he was perhaps over-optimistic in appealing to 'the cool and dispassionate philanthropist', who (he hoped) would approve the author's intentions, and 'lend his assistance in endeavouring to dissipate the cloud of prejudice that has overpowered the good sense of many of my countrymen'.[52]

Meanwhile Hay points to Protestant prejudice in his own county of Wexford. In the 1780s many volunteer battalions had admitted

Catholics, who 'proved themselves worthy of the liberal confidence that dictated their admission, which the existing laws did not strictly sanction'. Amid this general spirit of toleration, Hay is 'sorry to remark that there was no admission for a catholic among the volunteers of the county of Wexford, a circumstance the more remarkable, as it was the only county that exclusively held up this prejudice'.[53] Hay next cites the response to Edward Byrne's circular letter on behalf of the Catholic Committee, convening delegates from the counties to meet in Dublin to frame the 1792 petition to the King. A meeting summoned in County Wexford by the High Sheriff to consider the Byrne letter, is described in some detail. The Hutchinson brothers' attempted assertion of the right of subjects to petition their sovereign, in accordance with the 1689 Bill of Rights, was voted down by 110 to 45. Hay, however, finds some comfort in the result:

> Three or four gentlemen of the respectable and liberal minded minority possessed more landed property in the county than the whole of the majority, so that the roman catholics had the satisfaction to see almost every man of considerable landed property, and of legal and constitutional information, go out in the division with them.[54]

Hay's self-consoling comment is more in tune with the social and political views of Burke than of Paine.

The political loyalty of Wexford inhabitants is attested by Hay's account of a meeting on 11 January 1793, three weeks before Britain went to war with France, presided over by the magistrates in the absence of the sheriff. Hay reports not only resolutions expressing loyalty to the constitution – while declaring the need to reform Parliament so as to admit 'persons of all religious denominations' – but a further resolution

> That the people in the county of Wexford were perfectly peaceable and quiet; no kind of seditious practices known; nor the least symptom of or tendency to riot; but that lest such should be intended by any faction, they declared that all attempts to introduce any new form of government into the country, or in any manner to impair or corrupt the three essential parts of the constitution consisting of king, lords and commons, they would resist with all their force and energy.

The resolutions, Hay explains, were forwarded to the county's MPs 'and inserted in the public papers'. The text is printed among the appendices to his narrative.[55] Hay insists that a political society, formed in the town of Wexford on that same January day, 'under the denomination of the friends of the constitution, liberty and peace', consistently adhered to its professedly peaceful aims, and 'never tended to disturb public tranquillity'. However, he notes sadly that 'their powers were not proportionate to their wishes, and their benevolent efforts failed of their intended effect'. The quiescence of the county is nevertheless borne out, Hay thinks, by the manner in which the unpopular Militia Bill of 1793 'was carried into effect in the county of Wexford, perhaps with less ferment than in any other part of Ireland'. Having been appointed a deputy governor of the county, he claims to be well placed to support this assertion.[56]

Against this background, Hay presents the riot of July 1793 – arising from an attempt to free prisoners in Wexford jail – as non-sectarian. He detects an inclination 'to attribute the riots to a spirit of religious bigotry', and remarks on 'an insidious spirit, eager and active to attach the entire odium of the disturbances exclusively on the catholics'. And this in spite of 'the damning public spectacle, on the exposure of the killed at Wexford'.[57] His indignation at such 'barefaced calumny and prejudiced misrepresentation', leads Hay into unaccustomed violence of language, likening the traducers to reptiles, and noting that although Ireland was famously free of snakes, it 'abounds with these monsters in human form, who batten on the ruin of public prosperity'. And to exhibit the extent to which 'groundless insinuations' were carried, Hay instances Lord Farnham's claim in the Irish House of Lords that Wexford Catholics had sworn not to pay rent, tithes or taxes.[58] Hay gives due weight to agrarian grievances among rural Catholics. He endorses Musgrave's statement that 'the inhabitants of no part of Leinster enjoyed so equal a portion of social happiness, as those in the county of Wexford'.[59] But Hay thinks this was more the product of the peasants' own hard work than of any social conscience or zeal for agricultural improvement among the landlords. While landlords 'becoming needy by dissipation and extravagances' resorted to rack rents, the Established Church collected tithes from Catholics and Dissenters. A movement to stop paying tithes to a new generation of tithe-farmers, says Hay, was in danger of spreading throughout County Wexford, 'but for the timely exertions of several of the country gentlemen, who used all their influence to prevent their tenants from joining in such unlawful pursuits'.[60]

The recall of Fitzwilliam in 1795, Hay thinks, was the point at which tragedy became inevitable: 'The removal of Lord Fitzwilliam must ever be considered as one of the greatest misfortunes that, in the revolution of ages, has befallen this devoted nation.' Hay's predictions of what would have been achieved if Fitzwilliam had been allowed to stay are over-sanguine, but they reflect the inflated expectations of his co-religionists:

> Had the benevolent measures intended by that nobleman been effected, the rankling wounds of division and distraction were for ever closed, nor would the poison of prejudice and party spirit still threaten convulsion and confusion, but harmony, confidence and peace would reign throughout the land.[61]

Instead, Catholics faced the Orangemen's alternative options: 'To Hell or Connaught.' Hay finds such behaviour astonishing 'where there were any men of intelligence, honesty or public spirit'. Yet 'these enormities seem to have been connived at, or totally overlooked', until many thousands of Catholics were driven out so that it became necessary 'to find occupiers for the lands they had been obliged to abandon'.[62] According to Hay, what he calls 'the orange system' made no public appearance in Wexford until after 30 March 1798, when the whole of Ireland was placed under martial law. He dates the Orange organization in Wexford from 'the arrival of the North Cork militia, commanded by Lord Kingsborough'.[63] United Irishmen, it seems, were also a comparatively rare phenomenon in the county before Wexford's magistrates and high sheriff cited their existence as necessitating the proclamation of 23 May 1798. Failing surrender of all weapons within 14 days, the magistrates would ask the government 'to send the army, at free quarters, into such parishes as shall fail to comply'.[64]

The inhabitants of Wexford (says Hay) started handing in their arms to magistrates on the very day the rebellion broke out in County Kildare. He deplores the failure to honour the promised 14-day period of grace which, if adhered to, would probably have allowed Wexford to escape 'the dreadful misfortune of open insurrection'.[65] Meanwhile 'numbers condemned to transportation, by the magistrates of other counties, daily passed thro' the county of Wexford on their way to Duncannon-fort'. Such terrifying examples 'added if possible to the apprehension already entertained, and the precedent was soon after put in practice in the county of Wexford itself.'[66] The actual rebellion in Wexford was provoked, according to its Catholic inhabitants, by fear of 'being whipped,

burned or exterminated by the orangemen', having heard of the 'unarmed and unoffending' being put to death throughout Ireland. Such reports were hardly contradicted by the violence advancing yeomen showed to Catholic chapels, which drove into the ranks of the rebels at least two priests – Michael and John Murphy. Hay describes them as being 'remarkable for their exhortations against the system of United Irishmen, until they were whirled into the *political vortex*'. He thinks their eventual political involvement occurred 'under the apprehension of extermination'.[67] Recalling that 'even among the twelve apostles there was a traitor', Hay pays tribute to Wexford's priests during the Rebellion: 'They comforted the afflicted with all the zeal and warmth of Christian charity, and in the most trying and critical period, practised every deed that must be considered benevolent by every liberal and enlightened man, whatever brawlers of loyalty may assert to the contrary'.[68]

Hay deplores the slaughter at Scullabogue, while stressing the spontaneous nature of the massacre. He quotes in full the orders given by the rebel commanders, Bagenal Harvey and Edward Roche, to prevent a recurrence of such horrors.[69] Among the British commanders, Hay praises General Moore, who 'did all in his power to prevent these atrocities, and got some plunderers immediately put to death'.[70] General Lake is censured for his refusal to honour Lord Kingsborough's proposed terms for the surrender of Wexford, but Hay gives credit to the conciliatory efforts of Hunter, whom Lake left in command of the town, and who 'checked the persecuting spirit of the gentry and the yeomanry'.[71] Predictably, Hay endorses Abercromby's earlier assessment of the disciplinary state of the army. The Commander-in-chief had famously described his troops as 'formidable to everyone but the enemy'. His frankness had prompted one Irish Privy Councillor to write: 'He may be an excellent general in the field, but he's a miserable bad Politician. I wish he had stay'd with the Negroes on Martinique.'[72] Hay thinks that, if Abercromby had remained in Ireland 'but one month more, it would have been providential, for when the insurrection had actually broken out, he could not so well have resigned his command; and his dignified authority would have restrained the soldiery from the horrid excesses they afterwards committed'.[73]

In criticizing the conduct of the military, the Catholic Hay was in unison with the Protestant Gordon, who (Hay reminds his readers) had lived as a curate in the same neighbourhood of Gorey for 23 years. Thus Gordon 'had every opportunity of watching the approach of the insurrection, and I sincerely wish there were many like him possessed of liberal and benevolent feeling for the delusions and suffering of the people'.[74] Hay explains that he himself has similarly chosen to limit his narrative to

his native district, where his 'local and personal knowledge were least liable to deception or misinformation'. If the imperial parliament were minded 'to investigate the truth decisively', Hay promises, 'I will stake my existence that my relation shall be found, on an impartial scrutiny, extremely moderate'.[75] Meanwhile, his closing pages contain a stark warning to those who deplored the Amnesty Bill and sought to circumvent it: 'I would recommend to those who express such an illiberal and shocking sentiment to reflect seriously whether they are not protected by the indemnity bills, as they might otherwise be exhibited on the gibbet.' Governor Wall of Goree had been brought to justice after 20 years.[76]

The *Antijacobin Review*'s correspondent (presumably Musgrave) who attacks Plowden's *State of Ireland* and his clumsily titled *Postliminious Preface* in the last two issues of 1804, points to Hay's residence with his publisher, John Stockdale, 'for some months previous to the publication of his book'. Both Hay and Stockdale were arrested on the outbreak of Robert Emmet's abortive rebellion in July 1803. The Wexford magistrates pressed for Hay's prosecution, and the Attorney-General and Crown Solicitor started proceedings. But the prosecution was dropped. The *Antijacobin*'s correspondent has no doubt that Hay deserved prosecution for his denunciation of the Wexford magistrates. The offending passage from Hay's *History* is quoted, with the liberal use of editorial italics:

> *Slaves to their superiors, but tyrants to their inferiors; those needy adventurers become the prevailing tools of power*. Justices of the Peace are selected from their class. These creatures have the effrontery to push themselves forward on every occasion, and *after a series of habitual acts of turpitude*, whenever an opportunity presents itself, they become *scourges and firebrands of the country*. *These wretches* have been set on *to commit flagrant acts of outrage*, to answer the political purposes of their patrons, who shrink from appearing personally concerned *in these deeds of shame*.[77]

The same correspondent, somewhat contradictorily, questions Hay's authorship, claiming that it is 'universally well known that from his gross ignorance and illiterateness, he could not have written anything fit for the press'. He concludes that the book was composed 'by some members of the Popish faction in Dublin, for the purpose of falsifying the woeful events of 1798, and the causes which produced them'. Its purpose was to 'fan the flames of rebellion, which was again on the point of exploding'.[78] The book had been published shortly before Emmet's attempted coup of 23 July 1803. But Emmet was, as it happens, a Protestant.

5
Debating the Union

The Act of Union, which came into effect on 1 January 1801, was more than a legislative union centred on Westminster. The Scottish Act of Union had seen the uniting of parliaments, but the Irish Act would unite churches as well as legislatures. The Act's fifth article provided that

> the Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Government of the said United Church shall be and shall remain in full force for ever, as the same are now by law established in the Church of England; and that the Continuance and Preservation of the said United Church, as the established Church of *England* and *Ireland*, shall be deemed and taken to be an essential part of the Union.

There was no mention of Irish Presbyterians, though the doctrine, worship and governance of the Church of Scotland were guaranteed – apparently with a view to reassuring Scots rather than Irish.[1] More glaring was the omission of the Catholics from the article defining the religious establishment. As Alwyn Jackson remarked, writing at the bicentennial of the Act: 'The Union formulated on January 1st, 1801, was not (as Pitt had hoped) between Britain and Ireland, but between Britain and the Irish Protestant elite.'[2] Sir Richard Musgrave, though dispossessed of his Irish parliamentary seat, nevertheless supported the Union – despite what is often said to the contrary. He wished to preserve the privileged position of the Established Church of Ireland, and to turn the argument about numbers against the Irish Catholics: 'In a menacing tone the papists have told us for some years "we are 3 to 1". With the Union we may retort "we are 11 to 3".'[3]

Francis Plowden's *History of Ireland, from its union with Great Britain*[4] would not appear until 1811. But eight years earlier he had devoted

most of the last 300 pages of his monumental *Historical survey of the state of Ireland* to consideration of the Union. In 1803 he recognized that, whatever the differences of opinion before the Act was passed, it was now every loyal subject's duty to make the Union 'accumulative of future blessings, improvements and permanent prosperity to Ireland and the whole British empire, now politically consolidated for these desirable ends'.[5] The effect of this ponderous plea for unity is somewhat undermined by a long footnote recounting Secretary Cooke's attempt to suppress the memoir on the origin and activities of the United Irishmen, written in prison (at the request of the ministry) by Arthur O'Connor, William MacNeven and Thomas Emmet. The footnote records O'Connor's complaint to Castlereagh that, of a hundred pages of evidence given to the government and the secret committee, 'only one page has been published.'[6] Plowden's tribute to Cornwallis is similarly counterbalanced by a complaint that the Protestant ascendancy had been maintained by 'the Machiavellian principle of *division*', and by the successful attempt 'to couple or identify the terms *Papist, croppy and rebel* on one hand, and *Protestant, loyalist and Orangeman* on the other'. Only the Union offered the means by which 'the Irish nation could be effectually, though perhaps not instantly, relieved from the tyranny of an Orange ascendancy'.[7]

Admitting sincere convictions on both sides of the Union debate, Plowden thinks the nerves of several members of the Irish parliament were 'from the shock of the late rebellion so much weakened' that many of them too readily abandoned 'the convictions of their whole lives', while some 'basely sold what they sincerely thought to be the interest of their country for their private gain'.[8] He recognizes that the 'fever' of 1798 'now took a new turn and raged with equal fierceness upon the question of a legislative Union with Great Britain, as it had upon the treasonable association of United Irishmen'.[9] Newspapers of 1799 and 1800 had teemed with 'essays, addresses, protestations, puffs, squibbs, censures and encomiums upon this great political question'. But among all the meetings advertised in counties, baronies and parishes 'religious discriminations indeed were not resorted to'.[10] Plowden records opposition from Dublin merchants and bankers, who resolved that the Union would be 'highly dangerous and impolitic'; from the fellows and scholars of Trinity College, Dublin, who asked their representatives to oppose the measure; from Wexford freeholders, who thought the Union would 'exhaust Ireland, and debase her from her consequence and prosperity, and increase the influence of the court in a formidable degree'; and from Speaker John Foster, who

inspired his Louth constituents 'with his own decided repugnance to the measure'.[11]

Plowden's seeming emphasis on the negative aspects of the Union moved Musgrave to suggest that 'some of Mr Plowden's readers will be malicious enough to doubt the sincerity of his approbation of the Union'. Among several such examples Musgrave cites Plowden's remark that, allowing for the numbers of 'placemen, pensioners and other influenced members', the minister's majority of 48 in the final vote on the Bill hardly reflected 'the independent part of the House, and of the people of Ireland whom they represented'.[12] The first debate in the Irish House of Commons secured a majority of a single vote for the Unionist motion. Plowden reprints, without any interposing comment, press reports of the 1799 debates in both the Irish and British parliaments. His extracts run to over 150 pages, leading the *Critical Review* to remark that wholesale reproduction of press reports was hardly a help to his readers.[13] But by allowing himself only an occasional interpretative gloss, Plowden leaves industrious readers to weigh the arguments for themselves. They could read Sir John Parnell's claim, during the debate on the Address at the opening of the Dublin Parliament in January 1799, that if Catholic passions 'had not been worked on, the spirit of affection would have prevailed, from the justice and moderation of the Protestant resident landlords'. Predictably, Parnell defended the Irish Parliament and its fitness to wield power, considering that in wartime 'the efforts of the enemy were better to be opposed by military force than by speculating on the constitution'. George Ponsonby (MP for Galway), supported by Sir Laurence Parsons, proposed an amendment to the Address urging that any steps to strengthen the empire should not impair 'the undoubted birthright of the people of Ireland to have a resident and independent legislature'. Castlereagh, by contrast, explained that although the Address contained no explicit pledge on a Union, 'it was clearly implied in the wish to strengthen the resources of the empire'. He had no doubt that a legislative union was 'the only means of settling that unhappy country in permanent tranquillity and connexion with Britain', and promised 'at an early day' to submit a specific motion.[14]

Other contributions to the debate are reported with equal even-handedness. Thomas Conolly (MP for Londonderry) objected that the 1782 constitution had created 'two independent legislatures in one empire, being as absurd and monstrous as two heads on one pair of shoulders'. And with 116 placemen in the Irish House of Commons, he asked, 'what was such independence worth?[15] Sir Jonah Barrington

argued conversely that 'one king and two kingdoms was the cry of the people of Ireland'. Why, he asked, should Irishmen 'apply to 547 Englishmen and Scotchmen to arrange their trade and modify their national establishments?'[16] Sir John Blaquière (soon to be raised to the Irish peerage) defended the ministry against charges of undue influence and corruption, and saw the Union as the only solution to Ireland's difficulties:

> Were not the Catholics looking for emancipation; the Presbyterians for reform; and a great bulk of the people for a regulation of tithes? Did not all these discontents aggregated together, and abetted by the machinations of the united societies, make a formidable enemy in their bosom? There were not two ways of meeting it.[17]

Castlereagh warned that 'if Ireland did not boldly look her situation in the face and accept that Union which would strengthen and secure her, she would perhaps have no alternative, but to sink into the embraces of French fraternity.'[18]

Sir William Plunket, son of a Presbyterian minister and soon to become successively solicitor-general, attorney-general, and (in the 1820s) foremost champion of Catholic Emancipation, thanked Castlereagh for exposing the Union in 'its naked hideousness and deformity'. It was clear that the proposed Union did not stem from any temporary cause,

> that it was not produced in consequence of any late rebellion, or accidental disturbance in that country; that its necessity did not arise from the danger of modern political innovations, or from recent attempts of wicked men to separate their country from Great Britain; no, they were now informed by the noble lord that the condition of their slavery was engrafted on the principles of their connexion, and that by the decree of fate Ireland had been a dependant colony from her cradle.[19]

Given the oratorical power on both sides of the 22-hour debate, it is hardly surprising that the votes were so nearly equal.[20]

When the House met again two days later, Sir Laurence Parsons renewed his objections to the Address, which he described as 'pledging the house under a metaphorical expression to admit the principle of a Legislative Union'.[21] Richard Trench (County Galway), who would later oppose Catholic Emancipation, noted that Dublin had declared its sentiments unequivocally against Union. Although 'he highly respected

that city, yet Dublin was not all Ireland, nor was Ireland the whole of the British empire; and in the fate of the British empire was involved that of the civilized world'. Trench defended the vast majority of Catholic subjects from the charge of disloyalty. If many had been rebels in 1798, 'it was not because they were Roman Catholics, but because they were ignorant and uninformed, and therefore liable to be deluded by misinterpretations of artful leaders'. The Rebellion 'was not a war of one sect of Christians against another'.[22] Sir William Smith, MP for Donegal saw the Union as solving the constitutional problem of Ireland's Catholic majority. After Union, 'in the one united Kingdom (of incorporated Britain and Ireland) the Protestants would, as they do at present, greatly exceed the Catholics'. Consequently, 'to make the latter nominally equal to the Protestants would not give them an actually equal, much less a predominant weight in the empire. The long-established pre-eminence of the resident Irish aristocracy was founded on *political* distinctions. But 'after Union, the consequence of the aristocracy would be founded on those distinctions of birth and fortune, which were as attainable by those of one religion as the other'.[23]

Similar arguments were deployed in the 1799 debates at Westminster, to which Plowden devotes another 60 pages. Canning, supporting Pitt against the objections of Sheridan, saw the aims of the Union as 'to secure Ireland to us and to herself, and thus to promote the happiness and security of the empire.' But he added that even Dr Duigenan, though 'well known to be decidedly hostile to the pretensions of the Catholics', had admitted that their exclusion from Parliament and the great offices of state would be unnecessary after the Union, 'which would ensure the Protestant ascendancy, should they even grant the Catholics complete emancipation'.[24] Plowden focuses on a long speech in the debate of 31 January 1799, in which Pitt put the point differently. He argued that, without the Union, the measures needed in Ireland, 'with respect to questions of contending sects or parties, the claimed rights of Catholics, or the precautions necessary for the security of Protestants', would amount constitutionally to 'a violation of the independence of that kingdom'.[25] Pitt promised that, although Emancipation might eventually be conceded, it would not come as an immediate consequence of Union. 'In the present state of things,' concessions to the Catholics could not be made 'without endangering the state, and shaking the constitution of Ireland to its centre'. But

> when the conduct of the catholics should be such as to make it safe for the government to admit them to the participation of the pri-

> vilege granted to those of the established religion, and when the temper of the times should be favourable to such a measure, it was obvious that this question might be agitated in an united imperial parliament with much greater safety than it could be in a separate legislature.[26]

It is easy to see why Cornwallis felt his hands were tied.

The appointment of Cornwallis as Commander-in-chief and Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in June 1798, despite what Pitt called 'his temper of mind and prejudice on Irish subjects', implied that the ministry had not yet decided firmly against Catholic Emancipation. Cornwallis was soon reporting to Pitt that Lord Clare 'will not hear of the Roman Catholics sitting in the United Parliament'.[27] That was in September. In October, Clare travelled to London to impress his views on the government, but found Pitt and Portland 'as full of their popish projects as ever'. Yet Castlereagh would shortly write to Camden that the Union was 'not to be accompanied by any official or legislative indulgence to Catholics'.[28] Modern historians argue that to have included Emancipation in the terms of the Union would have jeopardized the entire measure – quite apart from George III's known hostility.[29] In the absence of a Catholic Committee, leadership of the Catholics passed to the hierarchy, who saw the Union as their best defence against Orangeism. Even Catholic laymen, like Lord Fingall thought it would damage Catholic claims to 'have them discussed in the present temper of the Irish Parliament'.[30]

At Westminster in 1799, Pitt placed the Union in the context of the war against France. In doing so, he almost apologized for his Irish policy of the 1790s. In the earlier debate of 22 January, he had challenged Sheridan's claim that England had oppressed Ireland for 300 years, though admitting that 'for one hundred years this country had followed a very narrow policy with regard to that kingdom'. Now, reminding MPs of the continuing threat from the French who clearly deemed Ireland 'the weakest and most vulnerable part of the empire', Pitt appeals to the recollection of 'those lamentable severities, with which the exertions for the defence of Ireland were unhappily, but unavoidably attended, and the necessity of which was itself a great aggravation of the crimes and treasons which led to them'. Among features of the then state of Ireland, Pitt listed 'the hostile division of its sects', animosities 'between the ancient settlers and the original inhabitants', the ignorance and lack of civilization 'which marked the country more than almost any other country in Europe', and the

'prevalence of Jacobin principles arising from these causes, and augmenting their malignity'. He could see no cure but the formation of 'a general imperial legislature, free alike from terror and resentment, removed from the danger and agitation, uninfluenced by the prejudices and uninflamed by the passions of that distracted country'.[31] Pitt's statement conveys a sense of the frustrations the ministry experienced in its relations with the supposedly independent Irish Parliament. His analysis is hardly in terms that Musgrave would endorse, though few readers of Plowden are likely to have given close attention to the parliamentary debates.

On the page recording the first and narrowest vote on the Union in the Irish House of Commons, Plowden's footnote explains: 'I have been more minute in the report of this first debate than it may be necessary in future, in order to show the disposition, temper and opinions of those who opposed and who supported the measure of Union; and also faithfully to put the reader in possession of the weight of argument on each side.'[32] He still allots a further 20 pages to the debates of February and March 1800. Pitt's resolutions in respect of Union were approved at Westminster at the end of January. In Ireland: 'Meetings in different counties were encouraged by the anti-Unionists; and strong resolutions were adopted with few dissentient voices'. Yet an Address approved in the loyal town of Galway is also cited:

> In the constitution of the empire, as it at present stands, we discover the seeds of party animosity and national jealousy. A Protestant parliament and a Catholic people! Two legislatures in the same empire! Hence local prejudices and commercial rivalry. By the settlement of 1782, the Irish parliament acquired the right of independent legislation – a right equally unsafe to exercise or not to exercise.[33]

Galway's loyalty to the British government was recognized by other commentators on the Rebellion. Thomas Newenham, writing in 1809, would argue that, if 1798 had been a truly Catholic uprising, it would probably have raged most fiercely in those counties where the population was overwhelmingly Catholic. In Galway and Kerry, for instance, resistance would have been aided by remoteness from garrison towns, 'and by their mountainous nature, presenting the most favourable theatres for the desultory and irregular warfare of rebels'.[34] Newenham's writing provides a striking example of how discussion of the Union could re-ignite earlier debates. Elected MP for Clonmel in 1798, and

himself an opponent of Union, he had nevertheless argued in favour of further concessions to Catholics.[35] The contents of his *View of the circumstances of Ireland* (1809) suggest that he was primarily concerned with whether Ireland's natural advantages had been advanced or retarded by imperial commercial policy.[36] But his economic analysis is prefaced by some two dozen pages of political comment.

Newenham recognizes that 'the very stability of the British empire incontrovertibly requires the permanence of tranquillity in Ireland', while Irishmen desire nothing less than 'a full participation' in the prosperity of Great Britain and in the security provided by the British empire. But if the prosperity of Ireland were to be 'inconsiderately disregarded', the connection could be preserved only by a vast military force, which in 1799 had 'equalled in number the whole effective and disposable native military force of Great Britain during the height of the last American war'.[37] He warns British ministers that if their Irish policy 'continues to exhibit a tissue of neglect, partiality and error, the union will surely be regarded by all reflecting and unbiased men, as a vain, illusive, nugatory and even mischievous measure'.[38] He doubts whether Pitt's ministers know enough about Ireland to govern it effectively, noting that awareness of Irish circumstances 'is probably not one of those attainments to which His Majesty's ministers are indebted for their elevation'. He suspects that ministers have been 'misled, with regard to the affairs of Ireland, by Irishmen in public stations personally interested in the practice of misrepresentation'.[39]

And if British ministers are ill-informed, what must be the ignorance of the British public? Newenham mocks 'the accounts of the British tourists, who hie through *the land of potatoes*, with a degree of celerity extremely commendable in a King's messenger or a Bow-street officer'. In their haste to see such natural beauties as the lake of Killarney and the Giant's Causeway, English tourists confine their accounts of the countryside to 'ill-fenced pastures overgrown with weeds', and to 'innumerable mud-wall cabins swarming with children and swine, and interspersed with miserable whiskey-shops'. No wonder readers of such accounts 'cannot find much ground for considering Ireland as a most valuable part of the British empire'.[40] Newenham undertakes to persuade his readers that 'the bogs are convertible into, for the most part, meadows of unrivalled luxuriance', that Ireland, formerly an importer of corn was now an exporter, and (less presciently) that 'the general use of potatoes has eminently contributed to augment the rental of the country'.[41] Owing to past misgovernment, however, 'the Irish peasant does not much excel the savage, in just notions of liberty, or in due

respect for the laws and civil institutions of man', while the peasants' living accommodation is 'little better than the huts of savages'. Yet in all other respects, Newenham insists, 'the Irish peasant will be found as far above the level of the savage man, as the well-housed, well-clad and well accommodated peasant of England'.[42]

Though not himself a Catholic, Newenham defends the Catholic clergy, and rebuts Protestant complaints that they deliberately keep their parishioners ignorant and illiterate. He cites two districts 'comprising about one half the county of Cork', where there are over 300 endowed schools, in which almost 22,000 children 'chiefly of the lower class of Roman Catholics' are instructed in reading, writing, arithmetic and even navigation. He also notes that 'the lower Irish, in many parts of the country speak two languages, idiomatically and essentially different, which, by the way, is far from being generally the case in Wales'.[43] The preface ends with the obligatory disclaimer: 'He belongs to no party; unless that term be extended to those who are zealously attached to the Hanoverian Dynasty, and to the yet unrivalled systems of civil polity and jurisprudence of Great Britain. He is a foe to every species of tyranny, misgovernment and abuse of power.' Seeking 'to promote the prosperity and vigour of the British empire, he little cares whether his language be pleasing or offensive to any party, or any public man whatever'.[44]

Even after the calamitous events of the 1640s, time eventually began to calm what Newenham calls 'the exuberant animosity of the Roman Catholics', though he deplores the impact of rival historians: 'Contradictory histories of past events, equally false, and equally calculated to perpetuate the ruinous mutual hatred and repulsion of the Protestants and Roman Catholics, issued alternately from the pens of each'.[45] He is harsh in his censure of post-Reformation Catholic priests who brought back from foreign seminaries 'a knowledge of monkish Latin, of scholastic theology, of obsolete and incredible legends and of the more sophisticated arguments employed by those polemics whom early reformers provoked'. These priests sought 'to enforce barren observances of religion, or to excite a general horror of heresy, not to inculcate the practice of Christian virtues'. But, unlike Musgrave, Newenham distinguishes the Catholic clergy of earlier centuries from those of late Hanoverian times:

> The pastoral zeal, the moral worth, the piety, the ardent patriotism, the just sentiments of loyalty, the extensive erudition, the generosity, the politeness, and the apparent liberality which, at this day, are

> so frequently found among Roman Catholic clergy in every diocese in Ireland…were very far from being the distinguishing characteristics of the Roman Catholic clergy before His present Majesty's reign.[46]

As evidence of a new spirit in the 1780s, Newenham points to the extraordinary spectacle of the Volunteer movement: '40 000 Protestant volunteers completely armed, highly disciplined, acting in concert, uncontroulable by government, and yet not only declining to manifest, in any shape, their hereditary enmity towards the Roman Catholics; but displaying, on all occasions, the utmost liberality of sentiment…'.[47] He acknowledges the negative impact of Lord Charlemont's peremptory rejection of the Volunteers' address urging equal political treatment of Catholics (Belfast, July 1785). He nevertheless thinks that Catholic distrust would have been 'gradually dissipated by those just and liberal notions, with regard to religion', which were then prevailing 'among Irishmen of all descriptions' – if it had not been for the 1785 peasant insurrection in Munster.[48] As for the 1790s, Newenham stresses the unhappy effect of replacing Fitzwilliam by Camden: 'Those public men who had given the strongest proofs of hostility to the Roman Catholic claims, were invited to assist in the government of Ireland.'[49]

The *Antijacobin Review* was pleased to quote a long extract from Newenham's summary of the situation on the eve of the 1798 Rebellion, but unjustly accuses him of asserting that 'the government fomented rebellion to carry the union'. What Newenham wrote was more oblique: 'To affirm that the government of Ireland facilitated the growth of the rebellion, for the purpose of effecting the union, would be to hold language not perhaps sufficiently warranted by facts. But to affirm that the rebellion was kept alive for that purpose seems perfectly warrantable'.[50] The *Antijacobin* does not challenge Newenham's insistence that 1798 was a Protestant rebellion – though it does ridicule his claim that Catholic and Protestant are separated by 'a few different speculative articles and the observance of a few different rites, confessedly inoperative in social life'.[51] The *Edinburgh Review*, in a ten-page notice, decides that it has insufficient space to comment on Newenham's analysis of 1798 or on his views of the Union. The reviewer is Thomas Malthus, who is predictably more concerned with systems of land tenure, methods of cultivation, restrictions on Irish woollen manufactures, and the living conditions of the lower orders. He thinks Newenham's *View of Ireland* falls short of the expectations raised by the author's earlier work on the population of Ireland,

published in 1805.[52] Malthus considers commercial exploitation of the Irish as significant a grievance in 1798 as religious persecution. Recalling the *Edinburgh*'s review of Newenham's earlier work, Malthus is sure that Ireland should 'ever be prized and cherished as our richest mine of wealth, as well as our strongest pillar of defence'. Instead the loss of Ireland is 'daily risked by the inhuman cry of no popery'.[53]

Musgrave had mocked the notion that the 1798 Rebellion was a Protestant enterprise: 'Because about *twenty-four* Protestants, Presbyterians and Deists were deeply implicated in, and some of them directors of this unprovoked, infamous insurrection, there are forsooth men to be found, who deny that this was a Catholic rebellion.'[54] By contrast, Newenham argues:

> The disturbances in the south of Ireland, in 1785, were fomented chiefly by Protestants of the church of England. And as for the rebellion in question, notwithstanding the multitude of Roman Catholics who engaged in it, and the barbarous outrages they committed, it may fairly be called a Presbyterian rebellion, as a regiment is called a Protestant regiment, in which all the officers, and a considerable part of the privates, are of that religion.

Among what he calls the initiative, executive, military, diplomatic and commissariat departments of the rebels, Newenham finds only one Catholic – MacNeven – out of 16 names. And MacNeven had notoriously declared under interrogation that 'the intention of the rebels was to abolish all church establishments, and that he would as soon establish the Mahometan as the Roman religion'.[55]

Newenham cites Fitzgerald's list of armed rebels in February 1797, which reveals 110,000 Ulster Protestants of all kinds out of a rebel total of 279,896; and he claimsthat in the predominantly Protestant county of Antrim, Catholic recruits to the militia were regarded as more reliable than their Presbyterian counterparts. There did not seem to be 'a single Roman Catholic organized or prepared for the rebellion in the year 1797, except in the counties of Kildare or Westmeath, and the City of Dublin'. Newenham notes that the rebellion began in the most Protestant part of Ulster, and 'at the battles of Saintfield and Ballinahinch, the rebels, it is believed, were Protestants to a man'.[56] He insists that Catholic bishops 'exerted their talents and influence in behalf of the government', and 'effectively aided His Majesty's commanding officers at the risk of their lives'. Regiments of militia, composed chiefly of Catholics 'distinguished themselves against the rebels, while the Protestants of the higher and

lower orders were in arms against the crown'.[57] Yet because, as it progressed, the rebellion raged among 'a rabble in Roman Catholic districts', the insurrection was 'boldly pronounced a popish rebellion, by those who were anxious to have it thought so', and believed to be so by those who were 'unfortunately deceived by the atrocities within the sphere of their knowledge'.[58] Among the consequences of the Rebellion, Newenham lists: increasing numbers of absentee landlords, large sums of public money expended 'in criminal prosecutions, which ought to have been employed with greater benefit in encouraging a spirit of industry', and the sanctioning of laws 'inconsistent with the liberty of the subject, and the spirit of the constitution'. Finally, the Rebellion 'effectually prepared the way for a disadvantageous and inequitable legislative union with Britain; a measure which could never have been accomplished without it, and which many of the supporters of that measure now lament'.[59]

Plowden's three-volume account of the first decade of the Union appeared in 1811. Dedicated to the Prince of Wales, the preface and introduction of Plowden's new work was reprinted from his *Rise, progress, nature and effects of the Orange societies in Ireland*, published in 1810. The full title of this single-volume work indicated that it was intended as an introduction to Plowden's forthcoming history of the Union.[60] The tone of both preface and introduction is noticeably more acerbic than that of his *State of Ireland* (1803). The preface begins with a response to Musgrave's hostile treatment of Plowden's earlier work.[61] Plowden reminds his readers of the pledge he made to resist all conspiracies and attempts 'against the King's person, crown and dignity'. He regards the Orange order as just such a threat, and intends now 'to disclose and make known to his Majesty and his heirs the traitorous conspiracy formed against him and them'. In taking the oath of allegiance, Plowden explains, 'he was not, and could not be acquitted before God or man, or absolved of that declaration, although the Pope or any other person or persons, or authority whatsoever, should dispense with or annul the same…'[62]

Plowden's *Orange Societies* asserts that the Union 'has not realized the flattering prospects which the British Minister held out to the Irish people as inducements to adopt the measure'.[63] Admitting the dangers of what he calls 'contemporary history', Plowden declares that the past century has shown that the government of Ireland 'was carried on by keeping up a local ascendancy of foreign power or influence over the natural constitutional rights and interests of that country'. He sees the 'British ascendancy' as an 'avowed appendage' to ministerial patronage.

This 'fell into the hands of an Irish oligarchy, who by a bold and arrogant usurpation, monopolized the whole political power of the country'.[64] In promoting the Union, Pitt, whose art it was 'to play off the opposite powers against each other, that neither should make head against himself' offered the 'option of *external* or *internal* Union'. Internal union would destroy the Protestant ascendancy, whose 'consequence and profits would be at least partially preserved' by legislative union.[65] Somewhat surprisingly, Plowden condemns Cornwallis for being 'as much the tool of Mr Pitt as his immediate predecessor, Lord Camden'.[66] Relations between Pitt and Cornwallis are the opening theme of *Ireland from the union*. Plowden denies that Pitt's resignation in 1801 was prompted by failure to carry Emancipation. He thinks it inconceivable that a ministry 'which had baffled and at last subdued a formidable opposition' should have been unable to carry 'so simple and just a measure, as that of an equal participation of constitutional rights among all the King's subjects'. But he does concede that Pitt's failure was due to opposition from the Duke of York, whom he describes as 'the peculiar patron of the Protestant ascendancy in Ireland'.[67] And he later quotes Grey's remark in Parliament that if Catholic Emancipation was promised to the Irish 'as the price of their support for the union', it must have been 'pledged without the authority of the King'.[68] It was undoubtedly unwise of Pitt to keep George III in the dark about the government's decision to introduce Emancipation – not indeed as an integral part of the Act of Union, but as soon as possible after the Union became law. The predictable result of Pitt's secretiveness was that the King heard of the cabinet's decision from the Lord Chancellor instead.

Pitt was certainly under great strain in 1801 – from ill health, from a divided cabinet, from a war that was going badly and from knowing that peace with France was probably unattainable as long as he was at the helm. Like Plowden, later historians have found it difficult to accept that the Catholic question prompted Pitt's departure. Could Ireland really be worth a resignation? Contemporary incredulity reflects the patronizing attitude of the London political establishment towards Dublin – even allowing for Britain's immersion in a war for survival. Pitt's letter to the King offering resignation (31 January 1801) bracketed Catholics with Dissenters as points 'that must naturally be agitated in consequence of the Union'. Pitt proposed replacing the religious test with 'a distinct political test pointed against the doctrines of modern jacobinism', which he thought 'a much more just and a more effectual security than that which now exists'.[69] Pitt was evidently more afraid of Jacobins than of Catholics. When, in March 1801,

George III sent a message to his prime minister of 17 years, it was in a deeply wounding form: 'Tell him I am now *quite* well, *quite* recovered from my illness, but what has *he* not to answer for, who is the cause of my having been ill at all.'[70] It was presumably in reaction to this implied accusation that Pitt promised the King (as recorded by Glenbervie) 'that not only from regard for his majesty, but also from private reasons of his own, he was resolved never again to stir the question'.[71] Pitt did not divulge the 'private reasons'. Yet adhering to a political principle, at the personal cost of resignation, was quite different from putting at risk the mental stability of the sovereign.[72] Pitt could hardly have expected to die 14 years before the King. Plowden prints Pitt's response in the Commons to the question – arising from a paper allegedly published by Cornwallis – whether any assurance had been given to the Catholics. Denying that any such assurance had been given by himself, by Cornwallis or by Castlereagh, he concedes that Catholics 'might very naturally have conceived a hope, and he had himself always thought, that in time the measure would be a consequence of union, because the difficulties would be fewer than before'.[73]

In 1810 a correspondent ('Verax'), writing from Armagh to the editor of the *Antijacobin Review*, mocked Plowden's persistence in spite of 'the clear exposure and refutation which you and the British Critic gave, of the gross and numerous errors and falsehoods' in the first edition of his *State of Ireland* (1803). Verax was attacking the abortive second edition of the work (1809) rather than his history of the Orange order or his yet to be published *History of Ireland from the union*. But the letter shows that the debate on events leading to the Union was still in full swing a decade later. It was in 1810 that the *Antijacobin* extended its title to embrace the 'True Churchman'.[74] There had indeed been powerful Presbyterian condemnation of the Union. William Drennan wrote three powerful pamphlets before the Act became law. Castigating the surrender of his native country as 'totally ineffectual for its pretended purposes', Drennan had pictured Irishmen 'with a prone obsequiousness, filling up the lists presented to them by the civil or military agents of corruption'.[75] Drennan had earlier addressed Pitt in print, describing the Union as 'a *military* idea', which had arisen 'as I think all your ministerial measures have done, not from original genius, or fertility of resource, but from the irresistible pressure of temporary exigencies'.[76] The Union could not be deferred until peacetime 'because it is neither for the object or ends of peace'. It was now suggested 'in the most exasperated season of the most exasperated war,

suggested from military views under military auspices, with the proximate intention of converting the country into a complete military establishment'.[77]

Like his English co-religionists, Drennan thinks Pitt's greatest mistake was going to war at all. He had chosen 'to call forth the desperate energies of the French people, rather than their first affections, which you could *at that time* have commanded', and had through his 'grand coalition frightened them out of all fear – but for their wives and children'.[78] In Ireland, Pitt had 'attempted to put an extinguisher on a constitution, with as little ceremony as he would upon a candle'.[79] The kind of Union Drennan wished to see was 'not an Union by conquest, not an Union by monopoly, not an Union by gold or iron, but an Union of mutual interest, the only bond of affection between nations and supported by *public opinion*, without which Union the spider weaves as strong a web as Mr Pitt'.[80] Yet, for all Drennan's rhetoric, Louis Cullen has pointed out that, after the vote on the Union resolutions in February 1800, 'as even Lecky was forced to admit, opposition fell away'. Cullen is probably right to complain that 'the story of the Union has been written from the future into the past' instead of recognizing the 'weight of the past' – particularly the immediate past of the 1780s and 1790s on events in 1799 and 1800. Yet there is almost a Musgravian intemperance about Cullen's characterization of the nineteenth-century perspective: 'The suppression of the parliament became a great tragic theme in Irish history. Barrington's writings and those put together with filial loyalty by Grattan's son, are self-serving sources for this version of the Union. These themes were then further confirmed in the ranting of O'Connell and in the deification of Grattan by Lecky.'[81]

The circumstances of the passing of the Act of Union enabled opponents of Catholic Emancipation to fight a successful rearguard action until 1829. Thereafter, as Cullen observes, 'the Union was already in effect doomed, even if nearly a century was still necessary to complete its death throes'.[82]

6
Opposing Emancipation, 1801–12

If early experience of the Union allowed the propagandist battle-lines of the 1790s to remain fixed a decade after the Act, the receding prospect of Catholic Emancipation ensured that the Protestant version of 1798 would become entrenched. From a modern perspective, it seems surprising that the 1798 Rebellion had not itself driven Emancipation from the political agenda. Yet in 1799 and 1800 the *British Critic* and the *Antijacobin Review* were both more concerned to combat English Protestant Dissenters – notably Unitarians – than the threat of Catholicism.[1] In February 1801 the *Antijacobin*, reviewing a pamphlet by Thomas McKenna in favour of Emancipation, commended it as 'a production containing much good sense and sound argument'. The short review does express surprise that 'Mr McKenna has not noticed the objections so strongly urged by Dr Duigenan', which have 'led us to entertain very strong doubts, not merely as to the expediency, but as to the *constitutional practicability* of rendering Catholics eligible to seats in Parliament'. The editors nevertheless express themselves 'open to conviction', and prepared to 'weigh the arguments that come before us on both sides with equal impartiality and attention'.[2]

Meanwhile the *Antijacobin* reviewed an anonymous challenge to McKenna. The spirit of the hostile pamphlet may be gauged from its reference to

> the year 1797, when the system of United Irishmen had attained a great degree of maturity, and was every day threatening open rebellion; and when the Catholics, little grateful for past favours, demanded new concessions, amounting to a surrender of the constitution under the fanatical name of Catholic Emancipation.[3]

McKenna had argued that, contrary to the published evidence of those United Irishmen questioned by the parliamentary committee, the Catholic campaign for Emancipation was no mere smoke-screen. As for the pretended obstacle of Catholics' dual allegiance, McKenna asserts: 'The supremacy of the Pope is practically little more than reverential.' In 1799, the year when the 81-year-old Pius VI died at the end of a 24-year pontificate, it was easy to believe that the days of the Papacy were over.[4] Yet within two years Napoleon would conclude a concordat with Pope Pius VII.

The year of the Act of Union saw not only the papal concordat and the first two editions of Musgrave's *Rebellions*, but the resignation of William Pitt – ostensibly because of royal opposition to Catholic Emancipation. The same year brought publication of John Reeves's *Considerations on the Coronation oath*. Reeves, a former Fellow of Queen's College, Oxford and a government placeman, had been a leading antijacobin figure in the 1790s, and was more hostile to Dissenters than to Catholics. His loyalist Crown and Anchor Association, formed with covert ministerial encouragement, was designed to keep French invaders (and French principles) at bay. Reviewing Reeves's 1801 publication, the *British Critic* could not find anything 'approaching to asperity' in the text, nor 'any very strong declaration about the inexpediency of admitting the claims of Catholics, any further than the obligation to preserve the law and constitution established in the time of King William'. Reeves argued, with some ingenuity, that the relevant phrase in the coronation oath had been intended as a remedy against the sovereignty of Parliament:

> The politicians of that day saw that they had no way of binding their posterity, but by binding the King, whose political character gave a sort of individuality to the nation; and who, in all succession of time, might set himself against every attempt that should be made, even by the ministers and parliament, to repeal the Protestant constitution which they intended to fix for ever.

More than half of the six-page review of Reeves is devoted to a verbatim extract. The *British Critic* notes the writer's (somewhat paradoxical) insistence 'that Catholics should not be admitted into our government; but if Ireland had continued a separate kingdom, they might have been admitted there'. The *British Critic* evidently assumes that the Act of Union had settled the matter.[5]

Before Fox's death in 1806, the Presbyterian William Drennan urged him 'to drag this "miserable and creeping" union into the light, that you may put your foot upon it'. Drennan wanted a 'durable union – that of love and loyalty, with honesty and honour; not the union merely of bigotry of sects, and the prejudice of political parties'.[6] Recalling the 1790s, which he dubbed 'a system of organized vituperation', Drennan deplores the Pitt government's repressive policy:

> Every question of reform was termed sedition; all concerted pursuit of it, conspiracy; all recurrence to first principles in government, *jacobinical philosophy*, until the abuse of terms wrought the very evil it affected to deprecate, and the disastrous consequences of which all the people of Ireland have such reason to deplore, both as individuals and as a political community.[7]

And as for Catholic Emancipation, Drennan claimed that prejudices were stronger in England because they are 'the prejudices of past centuries which now arise from the tomb; and the public mind is agitated, not so much by fears for the Constitution, as by the ancient terrors of the cradle'.[8]

The deep-seated anti-Catholic prejudices of the English were similarly challenged by the Rev. Sydney Smith, future prebendary of Bristol Cathedral and canon of St Paul's, who (with Jeffery and Brougham) had founded the *Edinburgh Review* in 1802, and was a frequent contributor to its pages. In his *Letters of Plymley* (1807), reprinted from the *Edinburgh*, he argued that nothing was more important than the defeat of Napoleon. He pictures Spencer Perceval (leader of the Portland ministry in the Commons) as the captain of a frigate confronted by 'a corsair of immense strength'. Instead of uniting his men by speaking of 'King, country, glory, sweethearts, gin, French prison, wooden shoes, Old England, hearts of oak', he adopts a different leadership style:

> He goes upon deck, reminds the sailors in a very bitter harangue that they are of different religions; exhorts his Episcopal gunners not to trust the Presbyterian quarter-master; issues positive orders that the Catholics should be fired at upon the first appearance of discontent; rushes through blood and brains, examining his men in the Catechism and 39 Articles, and positively forbids every one to spunge or ram, who has not taken the Sacrament according to the Church of England.[9]

Smith asks whether the Establishment was 'never so much in danger as when Hoche was in Bantry Bay, and whether all the books of Bossuet, or the arts of the Jesuits, were half as terrible.'[10]

The reverend author admits to being 'as disgusted with the nonsense of the Roman Catholic religion' as is his imaginary correspondent. But what, he asks 'have I to do with the speculative nonsense of his theology, when the object is to elect the mayor of a county town, or to appoint the colonel of a marching regiment?' Why not relax the laws against Catholics just as the Test and Corporation Acts in Ireland had already been repealed for Protestant Dissenters?[11] The future canon of St Paul's shudders 'to see religion treated like a cockade' and become a party matter. 'I love the King, but I love the people as well as the King; and if I am sorry to see his old age molested, I am much more sorry to see four million Catholics baffled in their just expectations'.[12] Smith ridicules the expedient of waiting for a change of monarch. It would be 'a proposal full of good sense and good nature, if the measure in question were to pull down St James's or to alter Kew gardens. Will Bonaparte put off his intrigues, and his invasion of Ireland? If so I will overlook the question of justice, and finding the danger suspended, agree to the delay'.[13] Meanwhile Smith likens British conduct in Ireland to 'that of a man who subscribes to hospitals, weeps at charity sermons, carries out broth and blankets to beggars, and then comes home and beats his wife and children. We had compassion for the victims of all other oppression and injustice except our own'.[14]

Sydney Smith's trenchant flippancy explains why *Letters of Plymley* went through 16 editions within the year. But the bravado of his sorties was no match for the sombre war of attrition waged by the pro-Establishment press, which exploited Drennan's 'ancient terrors' all too effectively. Reviewing Musgrave's *Rebellions*, the *British Critic* had argued that those who sought to win over the Catholics by extending their privileges 'cannot but perceive here [in Musgrave's pages] that what Popery was at the massacre of St Bartholomew, such exactly it was when freed from restraint'.[15] The *Antijacobin* similarly appealed to history, 'in whose page we may also look for the conduct of the Romanists when in the possession of power'.[16] Contradicting the *Monthly Review*, the *Antijacobin* applauds *Thoughts on the Catholic Question* for its defence of 'our glorious constitution against the insidious projects of Jacobin innovators'.[17] Earlier in 1807, the *Antijacobin*, referring readers to Musgrave's *Rebellions*, insists that 'a conspiracy for a Popish rebellion had been organized by the Defenders, under the protection of the Catholic Committee, long before the institution of the United Irishmen'.[18] The

Society of United Irishmen would shortly appear in an *Antijacobin* lead review as 'a democratic faction, aping the vices of our neighbours, kindling the revolutionary principles of the times'.[19]

Not altogether dissimilar rhetoric was applied by Dr Duigenan to Fox's ministry – albeit in a private letter to the Archbishop of Cashel. 'Mr Fox and his party of Deists and republicans,' Duigenan complained, 'can only be paralleled by the changes in France'.[20] After Fox's death in September 1806, Grenville continued to follow a policy of conciliation in Ireland, but his proposal to allow Catholics to serve as officers in the British Army met with an outright prohibition from the King. Meanwhile the newly formed Catholic Association was demanding admission to the offices of sheriff and King's Counsel, and also to municipal corporations. The result was the election of a Portland ministry on an avowedly 'no popery' ticket, with Duigenan promoted to Privy Councillor. Grenville remained committed to the Catholic cause, but his suggestion in 1808 of a crown veto in Catholic episcopal appointments would, in one historian's words, 'earn him much abuse from those Irish Catholics on whose behalf he had sacrificed his ministerial career'.[21]

In his historical sketch of European politics, which opens the bound volume of the *Antijacobin Review* for 1808, the editor comments on the supine attitude of defenders of the Establishment during debates on the government grant to Maynooth College. When Protestant schools are accused of anti-Catholic indoctrination, the parliamentary opposition's 'libel on the members of the Protestant Church is heard, in the imperial legislature, in calmness, and passes without an answer!' Such pro-Catholic sympathies are 'infinitely more reprehensible, when the peculiar circumstances of the Protestants in Ireland are considered', surrounded as they are by 'hordes of ignorant and fanatical priests, who labour, with infinitely greater assiduity, to make converts than to propagate a truly Christian spirit!' And the editor repeats Wellesley's improbable charge in the House of Commons that 'in the Popish schools in Ireland PAINE'S RIGHTS OF MAN was introduced, encouraged and read'.[22] No wonder the *Edinburgh Review* was taken to task by one of the *Antijacobin*'s correspondents for supporting those 'modern Protestants' who not only 'plead in favour of the Catholics, but endeavour to incite their resentment against us'. He is convinced that 'the poor Catholics in Ireland have the sense to be contented with the toleration they enjoy, excepting the French party, who must be guarded by the strong arm of power'. And he invokes Edmund Burke in support of the claim that Jacobins 'were impervious to reason'.[23]

From 1803 onwards, the tone of the reviews and correspondence of the antijacobin monthlies needs to be set against the long-running confrontation between Musgrave and Plowden. In the second half of 1807, the *Antijcaobin* was still reviewing Musgrave's anonymous *Strictures* on Plowden's *Historical Review of the State of Ireland*.[24] Yet despite the deaths of Pitt and Fox, and the strengthening of conservative tendencies by the displacement of Grey and Grenville by Portland, the *Monthly Review* remained committed to Emancipation. Although it had long since abandoned its radical stance of the 1790s, the *Monthly* now accorded a nine-page notice to William Parnell's *Apology for the Irish Catholics*. The reviewer affirmed his own conviction that bigotry and fanaticism were ill-suited to the British Empire:

> With one religion established in the South and another in the North of Great Britain, and with a third professed by a large majority of our fellow subjects of the sister island – with several colonies in which the Catholic is the predominant church – and with millions of Pagans and Mohammedan subjects – never was an empire which required men of enlarged and liberal views to preside over its councils.

The royal veto was not mentioned, but the *Monthly*'s reviewer has no doubt that the question of Catholic Emancipation 'should not be dismissed till it has undergone the fullest discussion, and till, by the pens of able and enlightened persons, the doctrine of religious liberty shall have been placed on an immovable basis'.[25]

The *Monthly Review*'s extracts from Parnell read like a critique of Musgrave. The author argues that Catholicism in Ireland 'had sunk into torpor and inactivity, till government roused it with the lash'; and that even then 'from the respect and attachment which men are always inclined to pay to government, there still remained a large body of loyal Catholics'. In any case 'the effect which the resentment of the Roman Catholics had in creating rebellions has been very much exaggerated'. Parnell makes the debating point, earlier made by Plowden, that the Catholic religion could not be the cause of disaffection and rebellion, because such occurrences 'were equally prevalent and inveterate when that religion was professed by both countries'.[26] Parnell's pamphlet, with apt topicality, highlights 'the circumstance of there being no Catholic officers in the army', thus deterring Catholic enlistment in the lower ranks. Unable to trust a Catholic militia or a Protestant yeomanry, the government brings troops from England: 'Then comes the fear of invasion, and your difficulties multiply an

hundredfold. You want an additional army to awe the militia, you want an army to keep down the peasantry, you want an army to restrain the intemperate zeal of the yeomanry, you want an army to oppose the enemy.'[27]

A brief notice in the *Monthly Review*'s political section of its 'Monthly Catalogue' for August 1807 records an author's view that 'the opposition to the late measure in favour of our catholic fellow subjects was popular, only because it was agreeable to the court'. The reviewer agrees, but finds consolation in the reflection that royal courts are as open to change as public opinion, and just avoids reminding his readers that the Prince of Wales is a king in waiting.[28] The following month, the same column carries a notice of William Russel's *Catholic Emancipation contended for, and justified by the words of eminent statesmen*. Seizing on William Pitt as one of the said statesmen, the *Monthly* notes that the late premier's parliamentary speeches on the Union, 'notwithstanding the extreme caution which they display, contain admissions which completely condemn the recent conduct of his disciples'.[29] Although Russel himself holds the papal system in 'supreme contempt', he wishes 'to see Popery completely overthrown, by giving to its professors such liberal toleration in all political affairs that no rancour or resentment shall operate to afford a plea for obstinate adherence to the ways of error and absurdity in religion'. Such arguments in support of political toleration are, the reviewer thinks, 'not very civil and obliging'. Though no admirer of 'the catholic system', the *Monthly* was unwilling to speak so contemptuously of 'a religion which More professed, to which a Chillingworth would become for a time a convert, which can boast of the absolute submission of a Pascal, of the acquiescence of a Fénélon, and of the eloquent and powerful support of a Bossuet'. The reviewer nevertheless concedes 'the soundness of the policy which is here proposed', especially as the author considers peace with France unattainable.[30]

That same autumn of 1807 a *Monthly* reviewer encourages the champions of the Established Church to 'make use of all the weapons which the Gospel allows in resisting every part of the system of Popery that is irrational and antichristian'. There could be no objection to seeing 'learning, argument, zeal and even wit, employed by Protestants against Papists, and Papists against Protestants', but neither side can be allowed 'the aid of persecution in any shape or degree'. The review records that the author's historical account of the Catholic Church 'justly exposes the wicked practices by which the Church succeeded for a long time in upholding her usurped power; but this age of enervating

superstition and credulity is past'.[31] The *Monthly Review* evidently still shares the optimism expressed by English 'Rational Christians' and Irish 'New Light' Presbyterians of the early 1790s.

In May 1808, Henry Grattan, now MP for Dublin and soon to be described as 'the *pensioner advocate* of the Irish papists', proposed that the petition of the Irish Catholics should be referred to a Committee of the Whole House. In the Lords, the Bishop of Norwich spoke in favour of the petitioners, thus attracting some of the hostile fire directed at Grattan himself. The anonymous author of a 90-page pamphlet complained of the Lords' debate that 'there was none of that firm, manly and decisive language which we had witnessed on a former occasion, and which so well becomes the statesman and the patriot'. The nostalgic reference was to a debate on Emancipation in Addington's ministry, when Lord Liverpool had 'most truly and emphatically stated that we had already, in our concessions to the Papists, proceeded to the very extreme of toleration; and that the time was at length arrived, when they should be told, *we will go no farther*'. Why had Liverpool not repeated his assertion made in the debate of 1808 'when circumstances more imperiously called for it?' Such temporizing was 'a sacrifice of principle to expediency' at a time when 'truth must be spoken to all public characters; both in the State and in the Church'.[32] Grattan's motion was nevertheless defeated, and it is understandable that a correspondent in the *Antijacobin* wrote of Emancipation: 'I think this question, with all the rational part of the nation, will now be completely at rest… .' He recalled that 38 Westminster MPs already owed their election to Irish Catholics, which 'shows the folly of having granted so much, and the absolute madness it would be to grant more power' especially to men 'who are conscientiously bound to subvert the Protestant religion when they can'.[33]

At the end of 1809. The *Antijacobin Review* was complaining that 'the Irish Papists are at work again'. A new petition to the King had been drawn up by the Catholics, who 'ungrateful for the unexampled benefits which have been conferred upon them by a benevolent Government, do not scruple to press upon Parliament a measure which they know to be repugnant to his principles and revolting to his conscience'.[34] By the following summer, Patrick Duigenan could claim more than 30 pages in a notice spread over two issues. As MP for Armagh in the Union Parliament, he had been a vocal opponent of Catholic Emancipation. Now, a decade on, his substantial pamphlet of 250 pages, attacking Henry Parnell's *History of the Penal Laws*, undoubtedly deserved notice.[35] The *Antijacobin* welcomed 'this excellent tract',

which was seen as particularly well calculated to provide 'a perfect knowledge of the state of Papacy in Ireland at this critical time, when its votaries are demanding in a menacing tone, to be admitted to Parliament, and to fill the higher and confidential departments of the state'. As Musgrave had done, Duigenan goes back to Elizabethan times to offer observations on Irish rebellions of the past two centuries – what the *Antijacobin* sees as the Catholics' attempts 'to separate their country from England, and for that purpose to exterminate its Protestant inhabitants'. Duigenan distinguishes two categories of rebels: those activated by 'disappointed ambition and avarice' and 'jacobins, the avowed enemies of all religion, disciples of Rousseau and Voltaire, who are constantly projecting new forms of government, and who agree in nothing except their enmity to the establishment in church and state'.[36]

As evidence of the continuity of 1798 with earlier Irish rebellions, Duigenan shows 'that in the course of it, the Romanists carried into practice the leading tenets of their religion, prescribed by the 4th Lateran council [1215], viz. *the extirpation of heretics, and the nullity of oaths taken to a Protestant state*'. Duigenan's reviewer makes much play with the alleged claim of Dr Troy that the decisions of general councils of the Church are infallible – not least that of 1215.[37] Duigenan himself refers readers to the brutal behaviour of the Catholic rebels in Leinster, 'faithfully, honestly and impartially set forth in the history of the rebellion published by Sir Richard Musgrave, Bart.'[38] Duigenan claims that 'the Irish Romish faction, and their host of hireling scribblers have never dared to select any one material and prominent fact stated in Sir Richard Musgrave's History of the Rebellion and deny the truth of it…but have universally contented themselves with general abuse of the work'. The only one of Musgrave's critics to challenge specific facts was Dr Caulfield, who was so effectively demolished (Duigenan tells us) that 'in a month after the printing of Sir Richard's reply, not a single copy of Caulfield's was to be procured at any bookseller's shop'.[39] The *Antijacobin*'s conclusion to its long review of Duigenan's own piece of demolition is uncompromising. The reader is referred to Charles II's Act of Settlement and Amnesty Act for evidence of the 'bloody atrocities committed on Protestants in the rebellion of 1641', which (according to the reviewer) the Acts show 'was contrived, promoted and carried on by Popish archbishops, bishops and priests; who were the chief incendiaries, in all the preceding and subsequent rebellions in Ireland'.[40]

By contrast the *British Critic* devoted only two pages to Parnell's *History of the Penal Laws*, concluding that 'all the whining lamentations

of their advocates are only feints to disguise the real object, which is manifestly to obtain, in Ireland at least, a preponderancy over the established Irish Church'. Two pages are accorded to Duigenan's rebuttal of Parnell, with the robust conclusion that his answer has 'forcefully vindicated Mr Pitt from the charge of having deluded the Irish Roman Catholics by promises which he did not fulfil'. Whatever Pitt's *intentions* may have been, 'it appears certain that he never gave them any promises'.[41] A footnote recalls that most of the Catholics' disabilities, remaining after the 1793 Irish Toleration Act, 'are removable by their taking the oath prescribed by that and a preceding Act'. These oaths, reputedly framed at the Catholics' suggestion, 'certainly cannot be objected to by any Romanist who does not hold the most obnoxious tenets imputed to that body'.[42] The issue of the royal supremacy in matters of religion is raised in the *British Critic's* brief notice of John Dillon's *Two Memoirs on the Catholic Question*. The reviewer dismisses Dillon's argument that the Oath of Supremacy does not explicitly state the supremacy of the King in spiritual matters, retorting that 'it certainly excludes the supremacy of any other Prince'.[43] The *Antijacobin* had earlier pronounced on conflicting supremacies in its notice of Thomas Clarke's *Memoir of the King's supremacy*. The reviewer asserts that, before the Catholics can cease to be a danger to the realm, they must 'tear up what seems to be deeply infixed in their feelings, every particle of attachment to the supremacy of the pope'.[44] The *Antijacobin*, like Musgrave himself, will not allow either English or Irish Catholics to escape their history.

Duigenan's aggressive riposte to Parnell had been published and reviewed in 1810. As that year drew to a close, the domestic political landscape was transformed by the terminal incapacity of George III. The Regency Act, finally passed on 5 February 1811, recognized the Prince of Wales as the King's proxy. Yet the changes implied in the transfer of royal power, so long looked for by Whigs and radicals, was more apparent than real. With public attention fixed on the Peninsular War, the Prince Regent was unlikely to promote Catholic Emancipation. The new year had opened with the *Antijacobin*'s lead review of Lord Kenyon's *Observations on the Roman Catholic Question*. Applauding the pamphlet, the reviewer decides:

> It is time for the Protestants to say to the Papists – we have gone too far already, we will not advance one step further in the path of concession, we have granted you everything essential to the full enjoyment and exercise of your own civil and religious rights; we will give you nothing which can enable you to destroy ours.[45]

The Spring of 1811 saw the *British Critic* reviewing an illustrated *History of the Inquisition*, while the *Antijacobin* resumed its anti-Catholic campaign by devoting more than two dozen pages to the latest petition of the Irish Catholics.[46] In May it chose to notice a Catholic history of the Church, first published in Britain with a Dublin imprint of 1771, and successively reprinted in 1790 and 1800. The review of the pseudonymous Pasterini's history began:

> It is a matter of general notoriety that the Roman Catholic clergy of Ireland never cease to circulate among their flocks books and pamphlets, which have a tendency to inspire them with that spirit of disaffection, and those intolerant and sanguinary principles, which their religion must necessarily produce under a Protestant state; and this work seems peculiarly calculated for the purpose.[47]

And in explicit reversion to the alleged lessons of the 1790s, the *Antijacobin* opens 1812 with a notice of a pamphlet comparing the role of the Catholic Committee in 1792–93 and in 1810–11. Readers of the review are referred to Musgrave's *Rebellions* – described as 'a candid relation of the events of that period' – and are reminded of the various members of the earlier Catholic Committee who had links (however tenuous) with the 1798 Rebellion. 'The Jacobins,' the reviewer concludes, 'in every part of Great Britain and Ireland, have consistently espoused the cause of Catholic emancipation because they and the Romanists co-operated in their malignant designs for the subversion of our constitution'.[48]

By the beginning of 1811 the 42-member Catholic Committee had been meeting weekly. Its members included Catholic peers, survivors from the Catholic Committee of the 1790s, delegates to the 36-member committee of 1806 (convened to prepare an address to the new Lord Lieutenant, the Duke of Bedford) and those who had managed the parliamentary petitions of 1805 and 1807. Throughout 1811 the Catholic Committee became progressively bolder, even trying to revive the Catholic Convention – though no sessions were held. Not all committee members were convinced of the value of petitions. It was pointed out that

> for every *one* Catholic petition a *thousand* controversial sermons are preached against us in England, five thousand copies of Fox[e]'s martyrs are *forced* into circulation, new tracts are compiled, old pamphlets furbished up again, and when in lieu of all pamphlets and arguments, it is enough to daub '*No Popery*' on dead walls.

It was hardly consoling to be assured by the *Antijacobin* that the circulation of anti-Catholic publications was in no way 'forced or subsidised by government,' but that their production was 'perfectly spontaneous, proceeding from principles and a sense of right'. Indeed the reviewer considered that ministers had 'displayed a culpable degree of negligence in regard to that potent engine, the press'.[49] In 1812 the Catholic Board replaced the Catholic Committee as the body responsible for the management of petitions. Those presented to Parliament in 1811 and 1812 were rejected by large majorities, but Canning's motion of June 1812 to investigate Catholic claims was easily carried in the Commons and only narrowly failed in the Lords.

The terms of Canning's motion were sufficiently vague, committing the House of Commons

> early in the next Session of Parliament, [to] take into its most serious consideration the state of the laws affecting his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects in Great Britain and Ireland, with a view to such final and conciliatory adjustment as may be conducive to *the peace and strength of the United Kingdom, to the stability of the Protestant Establishment, and to the general satisfaction and concord of all classes of his Majesty's subjects*.

The italicized words were seized on by an anonymous critic, who noted that resolutions in one session of Parliament had no binding force on another. But he demanded reassurance that 'these wise and salutary conditions would be insisted upon, previously to any final and conciliatory adjustment being considered'.[50] Canning's June 1812 motion followed the advent earlier that month of a new ministry under Lord Liverpool, after the assassination of Spencer Perceval by a commercial agent ruined by Britain's economic blockade. Two months before becoming Prime Minister, Liverpool had not ruled out Catholic Emancipation, but thought it would need to wait for 'some serious and essential changes' to take place. If such changes did occur, 'the question may come, under new circumstances, before Parliament'.[51] In that same debate the Duke of Sussex had spoken in favour of 'a calm and dispassionate consideration of the Catholic Question, under the influence of the benign feeling of universal charity'. Reviewing the published version of the speech, the *Critical Review* welcomed the Duke's appeal to Dissenters and Catholics to unite as 'friends of religious liberty', and considered that no government could long oppose such an alliance in support of Catholic claims.[52]

Such an alliance between Protestant Dissenters and Catholic petitioners was exactly what the *Antijacobin* feared. Commenting on the *Claims of the Roman Catholics considered*, in a notice spread over two issues, the reviewer robustly defended the Test and Corporation Acts. The review nevertheless concedes that Dissenters are less of a threat to the Establishment than the Catholics 'with whom its destruction, say what they will, is a point of conscience'. The reviewer supports this claim by citing the infallibility of popes and councils alleged by Dr Troy and Francis Plowden – and by 'his brother the Rev, Charles Plowden'. From the decrees of the 4th Lateran Council may be traced 'the massacres of St Bartholomew, the fires in Smithfield and the rebellions in Ireland'.[53] The first year of Liverpool's long ministry provided a further link with 1798 in the pastoral charge delivered by Pitt's old tutor, George Pretyman [now Tomline], Bishop of Lincoln.[54] Tomline followed Musgrave and Duigenan in emphasizing the unchanging nature of Catholicism over the centuries. He quotes (yet again) both Troy and the 1215 Lateran Council, and Plowden's denial that 'modern Roman Catholics differ in one iota from their ancestors'.[55]

But the impact of the Bishop of Lincoln's intervention did not rely on his repetition of points scored by other polemicists. His persuasive distinction between religious toleration and political power was drawn with some force. Apart from toleration of their worship, there was 'a regular Popish Hierarchy in Ireland, and in some degree in England', members of which 'are allowed to pronounce Ecclesiastical censures and inflict punishments, upon the members of their own Church; and all this *without any restriction or interference on the part of our Government*'.[56] Admission to positions of trust in the civil government is denied to Catholics because they 'hold opinions incompatible with the safety of our Constitution both in Church and State'. The Bishop argues that every national constitution 'with perhaps a single exception' [presumably the United States] has both religious and civil parts, 'and these parts are generally, if not always, so blended and entwined together that the one cannot be destroyed without imminent danger to the other'.[57] As for the United Kingdom, Tomline states his view with clarity: 'Protestantism is an essential part of our British Constitution; and therefore the constitution does not allow the King to be a Papist, because a Popish King could not be expected to maintain a Protestant Establishment.' And, similarly: 'Would Popish peers or Popish Members of the House of Commons enact laws for the security of the Protestant Government?' What would have happened in 1745, the Bishop asks, if the leading men in the Commons, the ministers of state and the army commanders had been Papists?[58]

Tomline instructs his clergy that the public offices in question were created, 'not for the sake of those who were to possess them, but for the advantage of the public, for the safety and government of the country'. They are not granted merely as favours or to be considered as rights: 'The benefit of the community, and not of the individual is the object to be attained'.[59] And what was the method used by James II to subvert the religious and political establishment? 'Was it not by endeavouring to remove all religious tests respecting the admission of persons into offices of power and confidence? And is not that the very object at which Papists are aiming at this present day?'[60] The Bishop takes seriously what he regards as the continuing reality of papal claims to supremacy – a jurisdiction expressly denied in the 39 Articles of the Church of England. While admitting that Catholics recognize their duty of obedience to the King in civil matters, what happens when civil and religious duties clash?[61] Tomline cites the Irish Catholic hierarchy's refusal to allow a crown veto on candidates for appointment to the Catholic episcopate, first proposed in 1808 as a condition for granting further political privileges. Yet a crown veto already applies to 'the advancement of any person to the Popish see of Quebec'. Tomline asks how far Catholic loyalty to a Protestant monarch can be expected to extend 'when they deny him even a negative upon the appointment to bishopricks within his own dominions'.[62]

Tomline reinforces his assertions by appealing to the events of the 1790s. The Catholic demands of 1793 were accompanied 'by the same promises of peaceable behaviour' and by assurances that, if they were granted, 'the Papists would apply for no farther indulgences'. The demands were met, and what happened?

> The Papists having thus acquired additional strength, and having, as they supposed, lulled the government into security by their promises and professions, formed new conspiracies, prepared for open rebellion, and invited the French to their assistance for the purpose of accomplishing their real objects, separation from Great Britain, and Roman Catholic ascendancy.[63]

The Bishop of Lincoln's effortless transition from the concessions of 1793 to the Rebellion of 1798, without noticing escalating Protestant provocation during the interim, can only be called tendentious. But it epitomizes the Establishment's version of 1798, which would demonstrate its effectiveness by delaying the enactment of Catholic Emancipation.

The Bishop's arguments did not go altogether unchallenged. The *Critical Review*, noticing the response of John Disney, Unitarian minister of Essex Street Chapel from 1793 to 1805, had some sport with the Bishop's complaint that 'general irreligion and avowed depravity' were characteristic of contemporary England. If this is really the case, the reviewer wonders whether the bishops have been 'sleeping at their posts, while the enemy stole into the garrison and got possession of the fortress.' Disney's own retort is that, if the Bishop's description of the nation's irreligious state is accurate, 'it proves that religious tests, penal laws, legal incapacities, have not accomplished their promised good effects, but probably have weakened the impressions and influence of religion on the morals of mankind'.[64] The *Critical* in its short-lived fourth series (1812–14) was notoriously sympathetic to Unitarians, and it shared the Unitarian commitment to the cause of Catholic relief. In November 1812 the *Critical* gave an extraordinarily favourable review to *A statement of the penal laws which aggrieved the Catholics of Ireland* – a pamphlet which the *Antijacobin* dismissed as exhibiting 'the stale cant of Jacobinism'.[65] Professing that it had always considered Emancipation as a 'wise and salutary measure', the *Statement* had convinced the *Critical*'s editors of the measure's 'absolute necessity in a political, and of its paramount duty in a moral view'.[66] Although Catholics were admitted to the elective franchise, they were still debarred from being 'mayor, sovereign, portreef, burgomaster, bailiff, alderman, recorder, treasurer, sheriff, townclerk, common councilman, master or warden of any guild, corporation or fraternity, or hold any such or like office in any city, walled town, or corporation in Ireland'. The *Critical Review*'s concluding paragraph accepts that the Catholic body is 'in this period of boasted knowledge, civilization and refinement, placed in a state of the most ignominious bondage', comparable in its 'crushing weight or galling pressure to the vexatious cruelties and injustice, which any people ever suffered under the worst of tyrannies'.[67] Not all the journalistic rhetoric was on the side of the Establishment and the Protestant Ascendancy.

The promised parliamentary debate on the Catholic question would take place in the 1812–13 session. Already in April 1812 an anxious correspondent had filled 20 pages of the *Antijacobin* in what he clearly saw as a last-ditch attempt to avert the passing of Catholic Emancipation.[68] In March 1813 the Irish Attorney-General, William Saurin wrote to Robert Peel, Chief Secretary of Ireland: 'I really fear the Protestant cause is lost in the Commons.'[69] Neither correspondent would find his pessimism was to be immediately justified.

7
Opposing Emancipation, 1813–29

In 1816 Robert Peel, who would exert a major influence on Britain's Irish policy for the next 30 years, boasted to Lord Sidmouth: 'We have no Catholic Board – nor any factious association under any denomination – no aggregate meetings – no itinerant orators and what is much better – there is no disposition to receive them with any sort of applause or encouragement.'[1] That same year, the *British Critic* began a 20-page review on a similarly self-congratulatory note: 'It must be a source of much satisfaction to every thinking mind, that the great question of CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION, which has now for so many years agitated and divided the British nation, is no longer a rallying point of political animosity or a watch-word of contending factions'. The reviewer contrasted this happy state of affairs with May 1813 'when Mr Grattan's bill with Mr Canning's amendment, was expected to have been carried through the House with a triumphant majority'.[2]

In June 1813 the *Antijacobin Review* had published the full text of Grattan's Bill in order 'to enable our Protestant brethren to form a just estimate of the innovations proposed to be introduced into the constitution of this country, as finally established at the [1688] revolution'. The text of the Bill incorporated an oath of allegiance, abjuring among other doctrines:

- that the pope of Rome, or any other foreign prince, prelate, state or potentate, hath or ought to have any temporal or civil jurisdiction, power, superiority or pre-eminence, directly or indirectly, within this realm
- that princes excommunicated by the pope or council, or by any authority of the see of Rome, or by any authority whatsoever, may be deposed or murdered by their subjects, or any person whatsoever

- that it is lawful to destroy or anyways injure any person whatsoever, for or under the pretence of any such person being an heretic.

These clauses were identical to those prescribed in the English Roman Catholic Relief Bill of 1791. A further declaration was now required: 'that it is not an article of the Roman Catholic faith, neither am I thereby required to believe or profess that the pope is infallible'. Additionally, the clergy were required never to 'concur or assent to the appointment or consecration of any Roman Catholic bishop or vicar apostolic, in the United Kingdom, but such as I shall conscientiously deem to be of unimpeachable loyalty and peaceable conduct'.[3] An amendment, carried by 251 votes to 247, deleted the right to sit in Parliament from the other civil and military privileges accorded by the Bill – thus robbing the sponsors of their main objective.

This defeat might have been reversed, but for the reaction of the Irish bishops to what they saw as a post-Union curbing of their independence. The *British Critic* recorded that, in the very month (May 1813) when the Bill was expected to pass the Commons, the Irish Catholic hierarchy declared that 'the Ecclesiastical clauses, or securities, are utterly incompatible with the discipline of the Roman Catholic Church, and with the free exercise of their religion'. The bishops' resolutions were confirmed two days later (29 May) at a meeting of the still extant Catholic Board, whose recent conduct is described as having 'presented an appearance much more of rebellion than of conciliation'. These comments were prompted by the publication of the speech made by Sir John Cox Hippisley in defence of the crown veto in the Commons debates on Grattan's Bill. As Hippisley had observed:

> Austria, and Spain, and Portugal, and Naples – the states of Venice, of Florence, of Savoy and Piedmont – in a word, as I have often noticed, every Catholic state has given proofs that they have known how to repel the encroachments of the See of Rome, by interposing such barriers as we now seek…[4]

Hippisley, Recorder of Sudbury and MP, supported Emancipation, and had given the Irish prelates advance notice of his proposed amendment, having also had it printed as an appendix to earlier volumes of his printed speeches.[5]

Throughout 1813 the monthly journals were reviewing anti-Emancipation pamphlets that had been published before the Irish hierarchy's rejection of Grattan's Bill, and its defeat in the Commons. The

voice of one Anglican bishop sounded from beyond the grave. Heneage Horsley, son of Samuel Horsley, had that year published his father's parliamentary speeches, including those made in the Lords' debates of 1805, shortly before his death. Samuel Horsley, then Bishop of St Asaph, had opposed the petition from the Irish Catholics seeking entry to a wide range of public offices. Reviewing Heneage Horsley's publication, the *British Critic* quoted the Bishop's 1805 speech in full.[6] Horsley had expressed his confidence in Catholic loyalty, and doubted whether any Catholic now 'thinks himself at liberty not to keep faith with heretics' or believes that 'the Pope can release him from the oath of his allegiance to his sovereign'. He concedes that Catholics are 'entitled to every thing that can properly be called toleration'. But he adds: 'My Lords, my mind is so unfashionably constructed that it cannot quit hold of a distinction between toleration and admission to political power and authority in the state.'[7] In the same issue, four less substantial pamphlets on the Catholic question are noticed. Extracts quoted by reviewers support the editorial line. One author reminds his readers that the royal ecclesiastical supremacy is at stake:

> On what principle of *right* can the petitioners claim that the Catholic Bishops of Cashell, Derry, Kildare and Meath shall sit on the same bench with the Protestant Bishops, who are summoned (by the words of the writ) 'to advise and consult on certain important affairs, concerning the state and defence of the United Kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland, and *Church* of England'.[8]

Canning's speech in support of the 1812 pro-Catholic resolutions is noticed, but only in a pamphlet critical of the stance he had taken on the issue.[9]

The anti-Catholic publications reviewed from 1813 onwards, demonstrate how actions of the Irish Catholic leadership had seemed to vindicate Musgrave. In a brief notice of a pamphlet by the Bishop of St David's, the *British Critic* finds it 'very curious that while the contest is in suspense, whether papists shall be admitted not only to toleration but to *power* among us, they have had the impudence to publish a rescript of the *present Pope*, positively refusing all indulgence to *freedom of opinion*'.[10] Similarly the *Antijacobin* supplies a survey of papal and conciliar decisions from Gregory VII onwards, including the 1215 Lateran Council to which Musgrave traced his definition of Catholic political claims. And instancing the unreliability of oaths of allegiance taken by the Irish priests in 1798, the reviewer refers readers to

Musgrave.[11] In July 1813 the *Antijacobin* challenges supporters of Catholic claims to show that 'obedience to decrees which enjoin the extirpation of heretics, and the violation of allegiance to an heretical sovereign, are perfectly consistent with loyalty to a *Protestant* King'. Wondering whether these decrees, 'so repugnant alike to the doctrines of Christ, and to the dictates of humanity', might have remained 'as a dead-letter among the paper artillery of the Vatican', the reviewer concludes that 'the malignant genius of Popery never sleeps; and never remains passive, unless restrained by policy or overawed by fear'.[12] The author's own footnote recalls the recent excommunication of Napoleon by Pius VII. Even if ineffectual, the Pope's action 'decidedly proves that Catholics are, in the present moment, in the *actual exercise* of that power so justly to be deprecated'.[13]

The year 1813 saw not only the failure of a Catholic Emancipation Bill, but the success of the Unitarians' long campaign to be formally freed from the penalties of the 1698 Blasphemy Act. The *Antijacobin* sees both Bills as evidence of the apathy and indifference which pervades both public opinion and Parliament. The Rev. George Burgess's outspoken comment on Catholic principles is welcomed:

> To depose heretical sovereigns – to falsify oaths of allegiance to heretical states – to dispense with obedience in a Popish wife to a Protestant husband, and in a Popish servant to a Protestant master, and to extirpate heresy as the best mode of propagating their religion – these are some of the tenets which to this moment stand unrepealed, and which must stand to the end of time, if, as Dr Troy asserts, 'the Church of Rome is infallible in her doctrinal decisions and canons on points of faith and morals.'[14]

The author adds: 'The public confessions of Mr Plowden, Dr Troy and Dr Milner, would not so constantly be referred to, as they are by all writers on the side of the Establishment, if they were not considered as most indisputable evidence of there really being no change whatever in the principles of the Roman Catholics.'[15] The reviewer is similarly convinced that 'Catholic Emancipation can never be granted without a sacrifice of the constitution'.[16]

Plowden resurfaced that same summer of 1813 in the pages of the *Critical Review*, which carried a notice of the re-titled two-volume edition of his 1803 work.[17] In contrast to Musgrave's treatment of Plowden (*see* Chapter 3), the *Critical*'s reviewer thinks Plowden has 'given a very impartial account of the rebellion in 1798, and of the

previous circumstances which led to that deplorable event'. Although he was 'walking over ashes in which the fire is not yet totally extinguished', Plowden's account of the Scullabogue and Wexford massacres shows that he 'does not wish to disguise the atrocities of the sect to which he belongs'. For the reviewer, the claim that the Catholics were behind the rebellion is disproved by the fact that 'of two thousand priests who minister to the Catholic church in Ireland, only nine were known to have favoured the rebellion'. Indeed the 1798 rebellion 'instead of originating in Catholic bigotry, had its primary source in democratic fanaticism'. The *Critical Review*, like Cornwallis in 1798, attributed the rebellion to Jacobins rather than Catholics. It had arisen 'out of the infectious cauldron of the French revolution, the principles of which acted most forcibly where an oppressive misrule prevailed, like that by which Ireland had been so long afflicted'. To call the 1798 Rebellion a Popish insurrection was 'either to betray a callous disregard for truth, or a gross ignorance of the circumstances of that event…'.[18]

Noticing *A full view of the Roman Catholic question*, the 1813 *Critical Review* argued that Catholics claimed only *eligibility* for political power. They simply seek 'the same chances of success in the competition for civil office and political or military distinctions as their fellow citizens'. As for Catholics differing from the Established Church,

> Have not the Methodists a particular form of church government which is also different from that of the church, and even more different than that of the Roman Catholics? Does this writer really believe that the influence which the Pope possesses over the Roman Catholics of these realms, is really sufficient to overthrow the civil and ecclesiastical establishments?

Since the Reformation, 'the power of the Pope has fallen to rise no more'. And if that power had fallen less in Ireland than elsewhere, it was because Catholics there have been kept under a more grievous system of oppression 'than in other parts of Christendom'. Too much had already been conceded for a wise government not to concede the remainder: 'Those who gave the Catholics the elective franchise, only threw out to them the apple of discontent, till it should be accompanied by the power of choosing Catholic representatives.'[19]

While the *Critical Review* urged Emancipation, the Establishment monthlies called for removal of the Irish 40-shilling freeholder franchise. The *Antijacobin*, besides objecting to 'the cant-word emancipation', regarded the grant of the franchise to Catholics as 'the source of

all subsequent evils; and its repeal will be their only radical cure'.[20] Reviewing the *Ecclesiastical Supremacy of the Crown* in March 1814, the *Antijacobin* believes that the anonymous author is the only public writer supporting the journal's editorial insistence on the 'necessity of repealing the bill which granted the elective franchise to the people of Ireland'. The British Empire, concludes the author, 'will never possess quiet or safety until the papists are divested of that misused and dangerous privilege'.[21] In view of O'Connell's successful mobilization of the 40-shilling freeholders, such stridency might seem prophetic. For the moment, O'Connell was concerned to oppose the papal rescript of 16 February 1814, which had sanctioned a ministerial veto on Catholic episcopal appointments. The rescript had been signed by Monsignor Quarantotti, not by the Pope, who was still detained by Napoleon at Fontainebleau. This seeming attempt by the Vatican to curtail the independence of the Irish clergy was challenged by the Catholic Board, by the bishops in conference and by O'Connell himself – who declared himself a Catholic but not a Papist. The rescript was withdrawn after lobbying by Irish bishops in Rome. The Irish hierarchy had proved to be more Ultramontane than the Pope.[22]

The cause of Emancipation was damaged not only by the belligerence of the Irish bishops, but by the defeat of Napoleon. For more than 50 years – ever since the Seven Years War – Catholics had won more privileges in wartime than during the briefer intervals of peace.[23] The post-war years of 1814–19 saw changes in the literary periodical reviews. The *British Critic* (1814) and the *Critical Review* (1815) both embarked on a new series; in 1817 they were joined by *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, soon to boast the largest circulation of any British periodical.[24] The new-style *Critical* signalled its altered stance in the lead review of its third issue (March 1815), where it notices *A brief account of the Jesuits*: 'Among the various evils, at this moment, threatening the vital interests of our country, few, if any, more imperiously call for the vigilant exertions of our legislature than the revival of the order of Jesuits, by the reigning Pope, after its solemn abolition by Clement XIV'. While recognizing 'the stupendous pillars of learning' by which the Society of Jesus was supported, the *Critical* decides that 'the crimes of the order are incorporate with its institution, and that they are more baneful to humanity than the scattered evils of Pandora's box'.[25] In 1816 the *Antijacobin Review* merged with the pro-Orange *Protestant Advocate*, reaching even greater heights of anti-Catholic invective. The Roman Church is portrayed as fulfilling 'the prophecy of the woman sitting on the seven-headed beast clothed in

scarlet', and is identified with Revelation 17.5: 'Babylon the Great, the mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth.'[26]

The restoration of the Jesuits was also condemned by the *British Critic*, but its volume for the first six months of 1814 – the first year of its new series – contained reviews of Byron's poetry and an Edgeworth novel together with *The beauties of Emmanuel Swedenborg* (translated from the French) and the *Memoirs of Horne Tooke*. There appears to be not a word on Irish Catholics or on Emancipation.[27] In May 1815, after a review of Wordsworth's *Excursion*, the *British Critic* concluded that concessions of political power to 'those who acknowledge the *spiritual supremacy* of a foreign potentate, could not but be attended with extreme hazard, in all its extended results and consequences'.[28] The work reviewed was a comparison of the Church of England and the Church of Rome by Herbert Marsh, Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity at Cambridge. The *British Critic* is confident that readers will agree with the Professor, that 'the authority exercised by the Church of Rome is incompatible with the welfare both of other churches and of other states'. The reviewer is certain that if the ecclesiastical establishment is undermined, the constitution 'settled at the Revolution, must fall with it, because it was specifically delivered down to us as a constitution in *Church and State*'.[29] The generally more muted tone of the *British Critic* by May 1816 was itself a sign that the Establishment considered the debate won.[30] In 1817 the London Pitt Club revived the Protestant Ascendancy toast in direct disregard of the wishes of Castlereagh and Canning.[31]

In 1819 Castlereagh and the Canningites supported Grattan's final attempt to raise the Catholic question in Parliament. Presenting 13 petitions in favour of Emancipation – five of them Protestant – Grattan urged the House of Commons to consider them in committee. The motion was defeated by two votes. The year of this narrow parliamentary defeat saw the 'massacre' of peaceful demonstrators in St Peter's Field, Manchester; a year later came Thistlewood's Cato Street conspiracy to assassinate the entire cabinet. The sense of reverberating echoes from the 1790s was reinforced by Castlereagh's notorious Six Acts in November 1819. In 1821 George IV visited Ireland, temporarily quelling dissension there; but in 1822 came famine. The government responded with an Insurrection Act and the suspension of *habeas corpus*, but before the summer was out, Castlereagh committed suicide. Other *dramatis personae* of 1798 and the subsequent Union were also recently dead. Grattan had died in 1820. Perhaps more symbolically, Sir Richard Musgrave and John Gifford both died

in 1818. Gifford, who did so much to promote Musgrave's publications, had founded the *Antijacobin Review* 20 years before, in the year of the Rebellion. His avowedly propagandist journal did not long survive his death, finally expiring in 1821. By that year, with the Lords' rejection of Plunket's Bills for Catholic relief, it seemed that the political climate had been so transformed that pro-establishment polemic had achieved its object. Musgrave (unlike Plowden) would not be re-published in the nineteenth century – perhaps because the Musgrave myth had become entrenched.[32] And in 1825, O'Connell's Catholic Association, founded two years earlier with a subscription or 'rent' of a penny a month, was suppressed by the government. Canning looked back nostalgically to 1812 as 'the halcyon days of the Catholic question, and happy should I be if there were any prospect of the like again'.[33]

In tune with the reactionary developments of 1825, the *British Critic* launched a third series, changing from monthly to quarterly publication. The publisher was Rivington (who had published Musgrave's *Strictures* on Plowden), and the journal was distributed by booksellers in both Edinburgh and Dublin. The editors explained that quarterly publication did not imply any change in 'those principles connected with the name of the British Critic'.[34] The last years of monthly publication had certainly set a definitive pattern. The Bishop of Killaloe and Kilfenora was applauded for reminding his clergy that Irish Catholics never cease to look forward to 'their real emancipation, when they may see their prelates more *publicly* enthroned in the cathedrals of their new titular dioceses, and themselves in possession of their forfeited estates'. The sermons of Dr Isaac Milner, late Dean of Carlisle, are described as expatiating 'not only upon the errors and abominations of the Romish Church, but upon the use she has invariably made of power when allowed to possess it in this country'.[35] And in one of the last issues of the monthly *British Critic*, the journal paid tribute to Robert Southey's *Book of the Church*:

> The Roman Catholics, perceiving that it opposes a new obstacle to their success, have endeavoured by every expedient to remove it out of their way. Dissenters, while they feel grateful for anti-catholic aid, smart under the lash of the new historian of the Church; and infidels, who shake hands with superstition and fanaticism, and reserve their venom for genuine Christianity, have assailed the historian in the Westminster Review, with an insolence and injustice which defeat their own object.

According to the reviewer, the Catholics had relied on the Jesuit Lingard, and on 'the redoubtable Mr Cobbett', to represent the Reformation as 'a curse'; but the *Book of the Church* had prevented 'the success of these machinations'. In Southey's 'glowing narrative' the Anglican Church appears 'in her real character, observing the just mean between superstition and fanaticism on the one hand, and a latitudinarian infidelity on the other'.[36]

After the demise of the *Antijacobin Review* in 1821, the *British Critic* was the principal periodical opponent of Catholic relief. But by the autumn of 1825, now appearing quarterly, it had been joined in the campaign against Emancipation by the powerful new *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*. This was a change of editorial line. In 1821, *Blackwood's* had announced that whenever Emancipation 'can be carried without danger, we wish it carried', and predicted 'that such a time will speedily arrive'.[37] But in 1824, editorial support for Emancipation gave way to outright opposition. *Blackwood's* volume for the first half of that year carries a lead article entitled 'The Irishman'. An unflattering contrast is drawn with Scotland, 'a country much inferior to Ireland in advantages of situation in extent and in natural fertility'. Scotland's greater prosperity is ascribed 'to the improved character of her people; to their general exemption from antiquated dogmas; to an awakened and emulous spirit of industrious exertion; to an ardent desire for knowledge, unimpeded by the clogs of religious domination'. Admitting the sorry social and economic state of Ireland, the magazine denies that it can be improved by either a change of ministry or by Emancipation. A dismissive reminder of the immediate impact of the French revolution, when it was assumed 'that the tide of democracy was irresistible, and that, ere a very few years elapsed, there would not be a king, peer or priest in the world', is followed by a tribute to Pitt. Thanks to 'the steadiness of British policy under the auspices of the greatest statesman of his own, or perhaps of any other age', there was a new spirit: 'The friends of establishment exulted in the defeat of those schemes which threatened its overthrow; the revolutionist abandoned his projects, the wavering became fixed, the timid reassured, and all appeared disposed to return with fresh alacrity to the cultivation of their true interests.'[38] The *Antijacobin* itself could hardly have celebrated the triumph of the Establishment in stronger terms.

Even more characteristic of the Ascendancy's view, was *Blackwood's* claim that the proposed parliamentary inquiry into the state of Ireland was both divisive and unnecessary. The Duke of Devonshire is censured for introducing the motion into the Lords. Such initiatives

should be left to 'pert and puny agitators' whose object is to embarrass the government 'with questions of ostensible utility and impossible embracement'.[39] *Blackwood's* had no difficulty in accounting for the distressed state of the Irish peasantry. It was the result of tyranny, yet not of a tyrannical British government, but of the Catholic Church 'which laughs alike at laws and rulers, and triumphantly maintains its system of espionage and terror'. Catholicism

> stands upon falsehood, imposture, ignorance and credulity. It has by its legends and superstitions, its relics and pretended miracles, its glaring falsifications of scripture and its monstrous assumption of the attributes of the Deity, placed itself in such fierce hostility to the Bible and common sense, that nothing but the barbarous ignorance of its followers can save it from ruin.

To allow Catholics into the ministry and into Parliament, would consolidate the power of the Catholic Church in Ireland, and shield it from all attacks. Emancipation 'would therefore secure to the people an eternity of the present ignorance, depravity, party madness, slavery and wretchedness'.[40]

In 1826 a much less substantial periodical than either *Blackwood's* or the *British Critic* acquired a new editor. George Croly, an Irish clergyman of the Established Church and veteran journalist of *The Times*, *New Times*, and Croker's short-lived *Guardian*, took over the *Monthly Magazine*. Founded in 1796 by the Unitarian Richard Phillips, and condemned by the *Antijacobin* as 'a vehicle for the sentiments of all who are disaffected to our establishments, both in church and state',[41] the *Monthly Magazine* was a slim journal printed in small font. Croly had contributed to *Blackwood's*, and his editorial stance was Tory yet sympathetic to Emancipation. At the end of its first year under Croly's editorship, the *Monthly Magazine* carried a lead article entitled 'Ireland in 1826', which contrasted the disabilities of the Irish Catholic gentry with the much milder disadvantages of the their English counterparts. A Catholic country gentleman in England was indeed excluded, by the requirement of an oath, from Parliament and various civil appointments, 'but in all other respects he is like any other individual of the same rank'. The Irish Catholic gentleman of equivalent status:

> is bullied by the mayor, preached at by the parson, distrusted by the grand jury, and excluded from the vestry, except when he can be charged by an onerous and unprofitable office; and he is insulted by

> every little jack-in-office, who thinks by his arrogance and violence to make himself friends with the partizans of the ascendancy.

But it is not only the Irish gentry who attract editorial sympathy. The *Monthly Magazine*'s readers are invited to imagine the Irish poor of the metropolis, 'without bedding or blanket, or fuel, the doors removed from the apartments by the landlords, to expel the rentless and unprofitable tenant'. Meanwhile the Anglican clergy are to be found 'occupied in the law courts with their tithes, or preaching polemical sermons, or uttering incendiary speeches in their nightly orgies'.[42]

This was a strange kind of Toryism for the 1820s, and seemed rather to echo the *Edinburgh Review*'s recent depiction of seven million Irish peasants: 'This mighty and rapidly increasing mass is sunk in the most abject poverty – while it has no property to protect, or institutions to defend, and nothing but injuries to redress and wrongs to avenge, it is ready to engage in any scheme of combination and blood.'[43] In 1828 the *Monthly Magazine* would abruptly abandon the objective of Catholic Emancipation, and turn its fire upon Wellington. But in 1826, the editor was willing to give credit to the Duke's eldest brother, the Marquis of Wellesley, who had been Lord Lieutenant of Ireland since 1821. What Croly complained of, in the first year of his editorship, was the 'chequered board' character of Lord Liverpool's agents of Irish government, 'having a liberal Lord-Lieutenant and an Orange Chief-Secretary; an ascendancy Lord Chancellor and an emancipating Attorney-General'. The subordinate officers were 'amongst the most determined exclusionists, throwing all sorts of difficulties of detail in the way of those measures of their superiors which tend to harmony and conciliation'.[44]

The *Edinburgh Review* had supported Catholic Emancipation since the journal was founded in 1802.[45] It had not expected Canning's Catholic Relief Bill of 1825 to become law, knowing that it would be lost in the Lords. But the *Edinburgh* objected to the speeches made in the debate by the Duke of York and Lord Liverpool, which were 'not less to be censured for the principles they inculcate, than for the temper with which they were uttered'.[46] However defective Catholicism might be as a religious system, 'there was nothing to warrant the exclusion of those who profess it'.[47] And after a further 30 pages, the *Edinburgh* decides that 'those stories about the overwhelming power of the Pope, and the divided allegiance of Catholics, have no existence except in the distempered and prejudiced imaginations of those by whom they have been

trumpeted forth'. In any case, 'Has not the Pope, at this moment, all the power in Ireland that he could have were emancipation to be granted?' And if he intended to use his power to injure the Protestant religion, and the English connection, 'is it not clear that he has infinitely greater means of doing so when that Catholic population is in a state of irritation and disgust…?'[48]

This was precisely the point that the *British Critic* refused to concede. It demands to know 'whether the Council of Constance did not, by a positive decree, enact that "faith is not to be kept with heretics"?' The decree is not to be found in the published acts of that Council, but the *British Critic* is satisfied that 'there seems very little doubt of the fact'. Conceding that there has been much improvement in both principles and practice of the Catholics, the reviewer decides that there is still 'more than enough left in the doctrines of that religion as they are acknowledged and professed, to confirm every declaration against them which is contained in the Articles of the Church of England'.[49] The new-style *British Critic* shows some awareness that Irish grievances are real, but remains 'firmly persuaded that a strong coercive influence is necessary to overawe and intimidate insurrectionary audacity, and maintain the authority of the law. The coaxing system will never do for Ireland'.[50] Commenting, in a lead review, on the evidence collected by the parliamentary committee of 1824–25 on the state of Ireland, the *British Critic* has no doubt that remedies are needed for the misery of the lower classes, which has 'reached a limit which neither the wisdom nor the humanity of the legislature can suffer it to pass without endangering the safety of the empire'. But the reviewer rejects the author's suggestion that an injection of capital is the answer. On the contrary, 'while the habits of the people remain the same' an injection of capital would make matters worse. The *British Critic* was clearly wedded to Malthusian doctrines.[51]

Among the Catholic representatives called to give evidence before the parliamentary committee was James Doyle, Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin – hence his pseudonym 'J.K.L.'. *Blackwood's* is mercilessly dismissive of the Catholic delegation from Ireland: 'In truth that was the most laughable of all the deputations that ever invaded us.' The Duke of Norfolk, as a Catholic, was obliged to tolerate them, while Lord Holland was 'compelled to admit them with a suppressed groan, inside the antique brick-work of his Kensington residence, there to afford matter of laughter to the metropolitan servants by their provincial gaucheries at table'. As for their hopes of playing 'the part of Franklin and the Americans in the days of Lord North', they met with a ruder

rebuff, and turned in despair to the radicals, Cobbett and Hunt.[52] The *British Critic* wonders why the committee gave any weight to 'the evidence of Bishop Doyle and Lawyer O'Connell'. It was 'amazing that, after what they had done, spoken and written, anyone should have thought that their evidence would have the weight of a feather with the nation'.[53]

In July 1827, the *British Critic* focused for more than a dozen pages on what it called Doyle's 'scornful defiance to the whole cause of Protestantism'. Doyle had drawn a distinction between decrees relating to Christian doctrine and canons relating to ecclesiastical or moral discipline. But the reviewer retorts that the Council of Constance had blurred the distinction, since the 8th and 14th canons were then described as 'delivered, defined and declared as decrees of faith'. And he asks whether the doctrine of papal infallibility at some future date, might give to the duty of persecution 'the full force and obligation of an article of faith, and thus fix it, irresistibly, on the conscience of all Catholics?' The *Edinburgh Review* is mocked for playing down the papal threat: 'All our alarms, however, we are assured by a facetious brother critic, are perfectly childish and chimerical. There is in fact no Pope, no Court of Rome. There is indeed a waxwork Pope, and waxwork Cardinals, but no Pontiff of flesh and blood. The real Pope of Ireland is Dr Doyle!' And the Anglican Archbishop of Cashel is censured for having allowed 'his fears for the public peace' to have 'overpowered his anxiety for the cause of Scripture truth'. He is reminded that 'the gospel itself produced, at first, a formidable distortion of society'.[54]

The first half of 1827 had seen what the *British Critic* called 'the rapid succession of accidents affecting the Roman Catholic question'.[55] The death of the Duke of York, the resignation of Lord Liverpool following a stroke and the appointment of Canning as Prime Minister, all pointed towards Emancipation. Yet by the end of the first week in August, Canning was dead. And by the end of January, Wellington had formed a ministry, with Robert Peel leading the Conservatives in the Commons. Both men had served as Chief Secretary for Ireland; both had opposed Emancipation; both would see an Emancipation Bill pass into law in a little over a year. But in mid-1827, the *British Critic* assumed that time was with the Protestants. England's debt to Ireland could not 'better be discharged than by making Ireland Protestant, provided it can be accomplished without consequences too ruinous to be thought of without dismay'. In almost millennialist terms, the reviewer wonders whether the fact that 'there is something marvellous and awful in the present agitation of the public mind' might '*possibly* be

the sign of some great work which the Lord is about to perform on behalf of his own truth'. If so, the time may be come 'for chasing away the darkness from that region of the Church of Christ'.[56] This vision of a Protestant conversion of Ireland was perhaps not unexpected in a journal of longstanding High Church and theological emphasis. More surprisingly *Blackwood's*, whose editors emphasized their lay status and promised to 'speak merely as politicians',[57] itself endorsed the view that 'THE CONVERSION OF THE IRISH TO THE PROTESTANT RELIGION would be the most invaluable benefit that could be gained by themselves and the empire at large'. Englishmen ascribed 'a very large share of our freedom and greatness to the Reformation', and it must therefore follow that 'a Reformation would be equally beneficial to Ireland'. For *Blackwood's*, the key was education. If the education offered by government was to be 'confined to reading, writing and arithmetic, and excluded religion from the schools, it would not answer its object'.[58]

The *British Critic* similarly focused on education as a key element in the Protestant conversion of Ireland, noting a meeting held at Cavan in January 1827 with the aim of promoting a 'Second Reformation'.[59] Cavan, in the North-east, was close to Ulster where Catholics were poorer, and their clergy felt more exposed in the face of Anglican and Protestant dominance. In Co. Armagh, Protestant proselytisers were said to be exploiting the Irish language, and issuing Irish bibles to the Catholic population.[60] Reviewing the educational provision to support the process of conversion, the *British Critic* cites the London Hibernian Society, founded in 1806 to establish schools and preachers, but active since 1814 in the dissemination of religious tracts. The Society assumed that only a Protestant Ireland could be peaceful and loyal. The reviewer acknowledged that the 400,000 to 500,000 Irish children estimated to be in Protestant schools were a fraction of 'those still left in ignorance, or abandoned to the common education of the peasantry'. Yet the fortunate minority carried into the population at large 'a knowledge, at least, of the existence of the sacred writings, which cannot fail to exercise some beneficial influence on the whole of society'.[61] By contrast, the *Monthly Magazine* could not see how conversion was advanced by sending 'crusading missionaries "to enlighten the benighted Catholics" by insulting and reviling their creed, and its ministers'.[62] By January 1829 the *British Critic* had to admit that the 'reformation' had made in its second year 'but little, though certainly some progress'.[63] Yet the editors remained convinced that the only effectual remedy is 'that religious reformation, which the worldly-minded ridicule as a chimera,

but which the religious man believes to be in the order of the Almighty's providence'.[64]

But the debate had now moved from Parliament, and from the paper-warfare columns of the literary reviews, to the Irish people at large. Although O'Connell was an outspoken critic of the violent methods of the United Irishmen, his Catholic Association revived the strategy of the Volunteers of 1782 and of the United Irish Society of 1791–93. He sought to force Parliament's hand by non-violent marshalling of sheer weight of numbers – this time through the ballot-box. O'Connell's own success in the Clare by-election of 1828 finally convinced Wellington of the political danger. Following Canning's unexpected death in his mid-50s, the Duke had deliberately excluded anti-Catholic hard-liners from his cabinet, and adopted Canningite policies. In 1828 came the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, supported by a petition from 800,000 Irish Catholics on behalf of Protestant Dissenters, who had themselves campaigned against the Acts for more than half a century. In January 1829 the *British Critic* was urging Wellington to treat Ireland 'as he would an army placed suddenly under his command; that army being ill-conditioned, ill-officered, ill-paid, ill-clothed, ill-fed, half-mutinous, and in correspondence with the enemy'. The review article expressed its editorial conviction 'that Emancipation must take place before the fabric of the British Constitution is finished', but that it 'must be postponed from day to day, and from year to year, and from age to age, rather than be effected in a manner which will endanger the very Constitution itself'.[65]

Within a month, Peel would propose Catholic Emancipation to an astonished House of Commons and a divided Tory party. The Emancipation Act passed, but in the process Irish 40-shilling freeholders were deprived of the vote. By extracting so huge a concession from O'Connell, Wellington was enabled 'to couch Emancipation in terms of a defence of aristocratic rule'.[66]

8
O'Connell, Emancipation and Repeal

In his first public speech, in January 1800, Daniel O'Connell challenged the claim that Irish Catholics favoured the Union. He urged his audience to oppose it. Ten years later, at a meeting of the freemen, citizens and freeholders of Dublin called by the High Sheriff, O'Connell supported petitioning Parliament for repeal. In an echo of 1791, he called on Protestants, Presbyterians and Catholics to work together for repeal, as no one group could achieve it single-handed. But for almost two decades he would settle for the narrower aim of Catholic Emancipation, focusing his energy and rhetoric through purely Catholic organizations. Initially O'Connell's preferred vehicle was the re-activated Catholic Committee.[1] The constraint was that any attempt to summon a representative Catholic body, to endorse a parliamentary petition, would breach the 1793 Convention Act prohibiting political representative assemblies not constitutionally provided for. Much of 1811 was taken up by the Catholic Committee's attempts to circumvent the prohibition, culminating in the trial of Dr Sheridan, with O'Connell among the defending counsel. The defence hinged on the phrase in the Act 'under pretence of petitioning'. The judge instructed the jury that, whatever the form of words, the Catholic Committee in its revived shape was an illegal assembly. The jury acquitted Sheridan nevertheless.[2] On 26 December 1811, the Catholic Committee reconstituted itself as the Catholic Board.

The Protestant monthly reviews kept a close eye on the Catholic Board, and on O'Connell in particular. In its issues of December 1811 and January 1812, the *Antijacobin* devoted a total of 50 pages to attacking the committee's activities. Reviewing an unpublished pamphlet, printed in Dublin, the *Antijacobin* asserts: 'Whoever wishes to form a just notion of the views and designs of the Irish Papists, need look no

farther than to the tract before us.'[3] The anonymous pamphlet's report of the Catholic Committee's debates is taken verbatim from the *Evening Herald*, 'avowedly the organ of the Catholic Committee'. The author hopes his readers will consider 'whether *Loyalty* or *Sedition* were the objects of the meetings; and whether, under the provision of the law, it was right to prevent their continuance, and the assembling of a Popish Parliament in Dublin'.[4]

Anxious to fasten the label of seditious separatists on the Catholic Committee of 1811, the *Antijacobin* editors link the continuing review of the *Evening Herald* reports with a pamphlet comparing the current Catholic Committee with that of 1792–93.[5] A member of the 1811 committee is quoted as saying that the claim to be engaged in preparing petitions is an 'unfortunate trick'. So the *Antijacobin* concludes that 'petitions annually imported from Ireland are the mere fabrications of a few factious individuals, intended to harass the government, and serve the purposes of party'.[6] Grattan is reminded that 'Christianity was established long before the existence of a Pope', and that the Protestant Reformation 'did nothing more than *restore* the truly *Catholic* church to its original purity'. The fires of Smithfield were not forgotten, while 'the massacres, too, in Ireland, in 1641, and in 1798, are still fresh in our recollection'.[7]

O'Connell's contribution to the Catholic Committee debates occupy some ten pages of the *Antijacobin*. O'Connell's reference to the 'lash and torture' of 1798 is particularly noticed:

> The sympathy of Mr Connell, as a Papist, is far from unnatural, but as a logician, he should not detach the effect from the cause, nor, in adverting to that calamitous and disgraceful epoch, when the practical extirpations of Protestant heretics was attempted, should he have omitted, in his picture of misery, the bridge of Wexford, and the barn at Scullabogue.[8]

A long extract is given from O'Connell's proposed address to the people of England, 'in which they were to be modestly told that the history of Ireland might well be called "the history of the crimes of England".' And the reviewer records O'Connell's insistence on the 'necessity' of repealing the Union: 'Emancipation, he said, would render that repeal certain.'[9] Between April 1811 and April 1812, the *Antijacobin* printed eight reviews or articles, covering some 169 pages, countering Catholic claims or discrediting the Catholic Committee. The editors repeatedly focus on 1798, referring readers to Musgrave's

Rebellions, citing the Defenders' oath, castigating 'jacobin principles', the 'stale cant of Jacobinism' or 'jacobinical harangues', denouncing 'the poison of French republicanism' and accusing Wolfe Tone and the 1792 Catholic Committee of having 'laboured hard to spread the flames of sedition among Northern Presbyterians'.[10]

While the Catholic Board busied itself with endorsing the Irish hierarchy's rejection of any ministerial role in the vetting of episcopal appointments, Robert Peel (Chief Secretary for Ireland, 1812–18) had the printer and publisher of the *Dublin Evening Post* arrested. Both were fined and imprisoned, though O'Connell, who had written for the paper, was left at liberty. The Catholic Board, which had flirted with the idea of calling another Catholic Convention on the model of the 1790s, was suppressed by proclamation under the Convention Act. Neither Grattan nor Ponsonby made any public protest. Peel's success in temporarily defusing Catholic agitation is reflected in Lord Donoughmore's recollection of a Commons debate in 1817, when 'the question of the people of Ireland, triumphant in argument almost on every previous occasion, was nearly kicked out of the House'.[11] By the early 1820s there were 'no public meetings, no petitions, no organization such as had won relief in the past century'. Even the feebler tradition of protest since the Act of Union seemed quite dead.[12]

Yet 1823 saw O'Connell's founding of the Catholic Association. He wanted the new body 'to take the strongest measures the law will allow to enforce our cause on the attention of parliament'.[13] It may initially have been seen as a means to buy favourable newspaper coverage of Catholic campaigning. O'Connell told his wife: 'It will secure the press in both countries.'[14] The brilliant device of the 'Catholic rent' – a subscription of a penny a month – produced £20,000 by the summer of 1825.[15] O'Connell evidently channelled almost half the subscriptions back into the parishes, to fund schools and train candidates for the priesthood. Under-secretary William Gregory claimed that the Catholic laity's readiness to subscribe was prompted by the predictions of 'Pastorini', promising the immediate downfall of Protestantism. It might equally have been the priesthood's response to growing evidence of Protestant proselytizing.[16]

Ironically, the Protestant campaign for a 'Second Reformation'[17] probably had more direct impact on Presbyterians than on Catholics. In the 1790s the question of subscription to the Westminster Confession had divided 'New Light' from orthodox Presbyterians, but had not prevented ministers of both traditions from engaging in the 1798 Rebellion in seemingly equal numbers.[18] Now in the 1820s, the open profession of

antitrinitarian 'Arian' views led to a revived and much more acrimonious debate over subscription to orthodox beliefs. Led by Rev. Henry Cooke, the Synod re-imposed subscription, thus re-asserting Calvinist fundamentalism and re-invigorating popular preaching. In 1827 the Synod overwhelmingly confirmed its belief in the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity.[19] In 1829 Cooke would found a new denominational periodical, the *Orthodox Presbyterian*. By then his rival, Henry Montgomery had seceded with 17 congregations. Montgomery visited English Unitarians, and advocated Catholic Emancipation at public dinners in Manchester and London; but he would later oppose O'Connell.[20]

Catholics could hardly object to insistence on Trinitarian dogma, but the Synod's re-assertion of Reformation theology was coupled with Cooke's earlier revival of atrocity stories of 1641. The official Presbyterian leadership distanced itself from anti-Catholic scare-mongering, but Cooke was probably closer to the instincts of Presbyterian laymen. O'Connell's campaigning largely ignored Ulster, where Catholic clergy were noticeably more cautious about challenging the ruling elite than were their southern counterparts. Outside the north, O'Connell enlisted priests in mobilizing a mass movement, in marked contrast to the 1790s, when (contrary to Musgrave) they held aloof.[21]

O'Connell had earlier remarked that 'securities do no good because we are kicked out as unceremoniously with them as without them'.[22] But he supported the 1825 Bill, introduced by Francis Burdett, which provided for 'securities' and a state stipend for the Catholic clergy, while replacing the 40-shilling franchise with a £5 qualification. *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* decided that curtailment of the franchise 'was not to remove the evils of the system, but to secure the passing of the relief bill', and would be withdrawn if the Bill failed. And when the Duke of York's opposition secured the Bill's defeat in the Lords, *Blackwood's* defended him against imputations of unconstitutional behaviour.[23] The journal also commends Lord Liverpool's speech as 'unanswered and unanswerable.' It had been alleged that Liverpool had offered the Catholics the alternatives of 'conversion or perpetual subjection to the disabilities'. But he had merely 'called for an alteration in the laws and conduct of the Catholic church as would harmonize it with the constitution and laws of the empire'.[24] *Blackwood's*, noting the absurdity of starting the 1825 session with a measure to suppress the Catholic Association in Ireland before proceeding to an Emancipation Bill, turned its fire on O'Connell:

> The worthy counsellor, who led his mobs to crush as far as possible the religious and civil liberty of the Irish Protestants – who declares

> that the peasantry ought not to be suffered to read the Bible, to enter a Protestant place of worship and to send their children to such schools as they may think fit – who defends the detestable penal code of the Catholic Church, and who praises to the skies the conduct of the Catholic clergy of Spain and France – this man cants in favour of liberty and liberal opinions with all the volubility of an English radical.

Only when the English nation saw the Irish Catholics 'as free from priestly tyranny as we are ourselves', would their protestations of affection for liberty be taken seriously.[25]

It is striking that, after O'Connell's acquiescence in the 1825 proposal to withdraw their franchise, the 40-shilling freeholders could still be mobilized. Peel thought their vote was wielded 'not by those who possessed the freehold, but by those who possessed the freeholder',[26] and O'Connell at first held aloof from the electoral campaign. At Waterford in 1826 – when O'Connell himself might have stood – it was Thomas Wyse who used the 'Catholic rent' to employ salaried local officials to arrange scrutiny of voters' qualifications and favourable press coverage. Catholic priests were involved in the election network, and a deliberate attempt was made to woo liberal Protestants. The result was that the Beresfords – an Ascendancy family *par excellence* – saw their candidate gain only 500 votes to his opponent's 1300. The significance for the Catholics was obvious. As Lord Donoughmore remarked: 'Hereafter no man will ever have a quiet election in an Irish county who does not support them'.[27]

Although the Catholic Association had voluntarily dissolved itself in 1825, when the Unlawful Societies (Ireland) Act received royal assent, a new Association was soon set up. But O'Connell's tours to address provincial meetings were regarded by ministers as 'having more influence in producing agitation than the meetings of the Association'.[28] On 17 January 1828, over two-thirds of the parishes in Ireland held pro-Emancipation rallies. As 1827 ended, O'Connell had predicted that 'the combination of national action must necessarily have a powerful effect on the minds of the ministry and the entire British nation'.[29] It would be the Catholic version of 1782. The Clare election clinched matters – not least because Catholic electoral activity provoked an Orange backlash. The risks of civil war were increased in September 1828 by Jack Lawless, a Catholic journalist-critic of O'Connell, who announced that he would 'invade' Co. Monaghan with 50,000 followers. Thomas Wyse condemned such 'unwarranted intrusion on the territory of their enemies'. (The use of the word

'enemies' is revealing.)[30] And as if to amplify revolutionary echoes, it was in 1828 that Charles Hamilton Teeling published his *History of the Irish Rebellion of 1798*.

Though praising the Irish Volunteers, Teeling avoids giving a detailed account of the United Irish societies, as 'the eventful consequences of their suppression, have long been before the public eye, and form a leading feature of the past thirty years'.[31] The sub-title of Teeling's history – *A personal narrative* – advertises his own participation in the events he describes. Charles and his brother Bartholomew appear among the 32 Catholic laymen listed by Madden as leading members of the United Irish Society.[32] Bartholomew, four years older than Charles, visited France in 1796 to help organize an invasion of Ireland. He served (under a French alias) with Hoche, and landed with Humbert's troops at Killala, before being captured and executed. Charles describes his own arrest and imprisonment in September 1796, 'while yet in my eighteenth year', on orders of his boyhood hero, Castlereagh.[33] Teeling recalls Grattan's prediction, on the recall of Lord Fitzwilliam, that, if the Beresford junto was reinstated at the Castle, 'I have no hesitation to say that they will *extinguish Ireland*, or Ireland must remove them'. Teeling records that Grattan's 'prophetic fears' were 'but too fully verified'. He cites: 'the disappointed hopes of the people, their despair of legislative redress, the insulting severity of the Camden administration, the cruel and wanton religious persecutions of Armagh, where 10 000 unoffending catholic inhabitants were driven from their homes at the point of the bayonet or by the torch of the incendiary.'[34] Before Teeling devotes four chapters to his own arrest and imprisonment, he recalls how the son of Rev. James Gordon was clapped in irons when Lord Carhampton's tour of the prison revealed 'a knot of green riband' in Gordon's cell.[35]

Among more general observations on 1798, Teeling notices that it was in those districts where the United Irishmen had made least headway that 'the greatest acts of outrage were perpetrated under the sanction of the government'. Wexford, which he describes as less identified with the United Irishmen 'than any county in Ireland', was one of the smaller counties in geographical extent. 'Yet in this county alone, thirty-two Roman Catholic chapels were burnt by the army and armed yeomanry within a period of less than three months'. At least one modern historian cites similar figures.[36] Teeling reserves his highest flights of rhetoric for 'the barbarous system of torture practised at Beresford's riding-house, Sandy's Provost, the old Custom House and other depots of human misery in the capital, under the very eye of the

executive'. He records the 'heart-rending exhibition' of a human being 'rushing from the infernal depot of torture and death, his person besmeared with a burning preparation of turpentine and pitch, plunging in his distraction into the Liffey, and terminating at once his sufferings and his life'.[37] And he reaffirms the claim, ridiculed by Musgrave and the Establishment press, that the United Irish Society had set itself the limited aims of Emancipation and parliamentary reform: 'These men had no revolutionary principles, nor would they have risked their fortunes on the uncertain issue of a revolutionary contest. Whatever might have been the more extended view of *individuals*, the great body had originally formed no design beyond these two specific points.' It was only when 'all hopes of constitutional redress had failed, when life and property were denied the protection of the law, that resistance became a duty and allegiance'.[38]

When in 1832 Charles Teeling published a sequel to his *History*, he noted that his previous account had 'attracted the notice of many London periodicals'.[39] The *Monthly Review* had certainly been complimentary though it objected to the book's sub-title: 'To be present in the Irish camp for a short time, and to pass through that of the royal army, do not appear to us qualifications sufficient for a writer who would undertake to give a "personal narrative" of the Irish rebellion'. Yet the *Monthly*, while recognizing that Teeling is no impartial narrator, accepts the accuracy of his 'most lamentable picture of the consequences' of the 1798 Rebellion.[40] And the reviewer concludes that 'though not altogether what his title pronounces it to be, it is an interesting and able production'.[41] Verbatim extracts from Teeling's text occupy more than half the review. But the reviewer himself asserts as an incontrovertible historical fact that the rebellion 'had its origin in the narrow opinion which his late Majesty held on the Catholic question'. The rebellion 'never would have happened had George IV been at that time the sovereign of these kingdoms'. As for the Union: 'If we look to the present flourishing condition of the United States, we might venture to conclude that both England and Ireland would have largely gained by the dissolution of this unequal partnership'.[42]

Teeling's *Sequel to the History of the Irish Rebellion* was swiftly followed by Sir Jonah Barrington's *Historic memoir of Ireland* (1833), an expanded version of a first fragment published in 1809.[43] Barrington, an Anglican moderate and a law graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, had sat in the Irish Parliament. He had famously described Musgrave as 'generally in his senses, except on the abstract topics of politics, religion, martial law, his wife, the Pope, the Pretender, the Jesuits, Napper Tandy and

the whipping-post'.[44] Sir Jonah now challenged Lord Redesdale's *Letter to the Earl of Fingall*, which claimed that Catholics' loyalty to a Protestant state could not be expected when their church considers 'Protestants as Heathens and the King as a rebel'.[45] Lord Redesdale (who died in 1830) 'should have recollected that the rebellion of 1798 was in fact a democratic, not a religious insurrection'. It acquired its 'Popish complexion' only from the accidental circumstance 'that in the parts where it raged, the majority of the population happened to be Papists…'. Barrington insists that 'the seeds of the insurrection were first sown by Presbyterians of the North of Ireland', who shared the republican tendencies of their co-religionists in England. The suspension of *habeas corpus* in England, 'promoted by Lord Redesdale himself', proved (Barrington concludes) that 'the Protestants of England were then as much suspected of disloyalty by his Lordship as the Catholics of Ireland'.[46]

The advertisement bound with Barrington's *Historic Memoirs* portrays his theme as 'the fallacious measure of a legislative Union' and 'the lamentable and unimproving march of Ireland' in the decades since. Because the Union had already become 'established by lapse of time – confirmed by passive assent – and complicated with some beneficial, and many political and financial arrangements, its tranquil reversal seems to have passed feasibility'. But Sir Jonah nevertheless hopes 'to open the eyes of Great Britain to the present dangers of Ireland' and 'to draw aside the curtain of ignorance and prejudice by which her history has been so long obscured'.[47] He expects that losing his parliamentary seat, on the demise of the Irish Parliament, will be held 'to discredit his historic impartiality'.[48] Yet he still deplores the fact that Great Britain 'authorized her ministers to prostitute two millions of Irish money, publicly to purchase the representation and representatives of the Irish nation'. He adds: 'France was revolutionized by the principles of liberty, which she imbibed from America – England might be ruined by those of corruption she countenanced in Ireland.'[49]

Barrington's main charge is that the Union is not working: 'Though alleged to have been enacted for the purpose of securing the tranquillity of the empire and the consolidation of its resources', the Union had not yet 'effected any of those extraordinary advantages, which were looked to from its adoption'.[50] Sir Jonah apparently saw no need to amend the preface originally prefixed to the 1809 edition, in which he quoted his letter (written before the enactment of the Union) resigning his commission in the Lawyers' Volunteer Corps in protest at what he called 'that blind and fatal measure'. He had then argued that

the proposed Union 'evidently throws open to the British Empire the gate of that seductive political *innovation* which has already proved the grave of half the monarchies of Europe'. Sir Jonah was no Jacobin. But he charges British ministers with 'stimulating two sects against each other, to enfeeble *both*, and then making religious feuds a pretext for political slavery.'[51]

Whether or not the earliest United Irishmen cloaked their separatist tendencies in their campaign for parliamentary reform, O'Connell (himself a sworn United Irishman) had evidently opposed the Union for as long as Sir Jonah himself. And during the Easter recess of 1830, barely eight weeks after first taking his Westminster seat, O'Connell set up the Society of the Friends of Ireland, whose object (says his biographer) was 'to pave the way for the repeal of the Union by obliterating ancient animosities'.[52] The society was suppressed by proclamation in the autumn of 1839, as were its immediate successors – the Anti-Union Association for Legislative relief and the Irish Volunteers for the Repeal of the Union. The Whigs took power in November 1830, but in January 1831 O'Connell was arrested on a charge of conspiracy containing 31 counts. His trial was postponed to enable him to return to Westminster to speak in support of parliamentary reform, believing (as he told his Irish supporters) that only in a reformed parliament could repeal of the Union be 'properly, coolly and dispassionately discussed'. When in June 1831, peasants and yeomanry clashed at Newtonbarry, Co. Wexford, leaving 18 dead, Bishop Doyle described the 'massacre' as 'a certain if not necessary effect of the proceedings of the government with respect to the magistracy, the constabulary and yeomen'. O'Connell predictably failed to persuade Parliament to disarm the yeomanry, but he suspended Repeal agitation until the Reform Bill was passed. Meanwhile the Chief Secretary for Ireland ignored the recommendation of a committee of both Houses that tithes should be abolished and Protestant incumbents compensated. Instead he set about collecting arrears of tithes.[53]

When in January 1833 O'Connell took his seat as MP for Dublin in the first Reformed Parliament, he heard references in the King's speech to a 'spirit of insubordination and violence' in Ireland, and to the King's confidence in Parliament's ability to adopt 'such additional powers as may be found necessary for preserving the legislative union of both countries'. A motion to couple coercion with 'a close and diligent investigation of the causes of discontent in Ireland' was defeated by 393 votes to 60. On 22 April 1834 O'Connell moved 'for a Select Committee, to inquire and report on the means by which the

destitution of the Parliament of Ireland was effected; on the effects of that measure upon Ireland, and upon the labourers in husbandry, and operatives in manufactures in England; and on the probable consequences of continuing the Legislative Union between the two countries'. He spoke for five hours.[54]

O'Connell took the House back to 1246 'when a number of Irish people applied to have extended to their country the benefits of British laws and the British constitution'. He quoted George III's message to the Irish Parliament in 1782 expressing concern at the 'discontents and jealousies prevailing amongst his loyal subjects in Ireland'. O'Connell quoted Parliament's reply, recognizing the dependence of both countries on the imperial crown, but insisting that 'the kingdom of Ireland is a distinct kingdom, with a Parliament of her own, the sole legislature thereof'. A legislature, O'Connell commented, 'had indeed power to make laws, but not legislatures'. As for 1798:

> He would show that rebellion was fomented, that divisions were kept up, that religion was distorted from its high and holy purposes, and perverted into an instrument of discord and assassination; he would trace these calamities to the promoters of the Union, to effect which they set the Catholic against the Protestant and the Protestant against the Catholic, and made the country one universal Bedlam, on purpose that they might assume the office of keeper, and turn it to their own profit and emolument.

Would anyone say, O'Connell asked, 'that the Union could have been carried without the rebellion? That was necessary to give to the difference of parties the tinge of religious hatred and animosity'.[55]

The most powerful rejoinder came from Peel, soon to enjoy his first brief period as Tory Prime Minister, but in this debate supporting the Whig ministry. Answering O'Connell in detail, Peel argued that what mattered was 'the conviction that we shall not consent to dismember the British Empire'. It was a question, not merely of sentiment but of unavoidable geography and strategic necessity. Without the Union, 'we should reduce England to the condition of a fourth-rate power in Europe, and Ireland to a wilderness'. Nature herself opposed the dissolution of the Union. And in any case, Catholic Emancipation had made the Union irreversible:

> New relations had sprung up since the incorporation of the two countries. The removal of the Catholic disabilities, and the measure

> of Parliamentary Reform, had introduced new elements into their very being. With the return of a separate Parliament, after the Catholic disabilities had been removed, what might not be expected from the triumphant rancour of religious hatred? It would amount to a complete disbanding of society.[56]

O'Connell's motion was defeated.

He had, however, acquired a powerful if sometimes embarrassing new ally. William Cobbett had dominated the inaugural issue of the *Antijacobin*, and had written *Detection of a conspiracy formed by the United Irishmen*. But he had long since abandoned his antijacobin fervour, and was now sending reports from Ireland for his *Weekly Political Register*.[57] In its first year of publication (1802), Cobbett's *Register* had opposed Emancipation, and although supporting it in principle from 1807 onwards, had considered it a distraction from social and parliamentary reform. Yet the publication of the first volume of Cobbett's *History of the Protestant Reformation* (1824) had given a boost to O'Connell's Emancipation campaign.[58] Cobbett depicted the Reformation as the emergence of a secular landed class displacing the devotional and social support previously enjoyed by working people. He saw Catholic Emancipation as a victory for lawyers, gentry and aristocracy, and a defeat for the 40-shilling freeholder – which is how Wellington wished it to be seen.[59]

Arriving in Ireland, Cobbett addressed an open letter to O'Connell. Beginning 'My dear Daniel', the letter paid tribute to O'Connell's speech in the Commons, opposing the 1833 Coercion Bill. It was, claimed Cobbett, 'you and you ALONE' who prevented the Coercion Act from being renewed: 'It was your conduct, in that five minutes, which produced all that followed; it was your conduct in that five minutes that brought me here'.[60] The *Political Register* also carried O'Connell's letter to Edward Dwyer, describing Cobbett as 'of living men one of the greatest benefactors of literature, liberty and religion'. The *History of the Reformation*, O'Connell claims, 'can now be read in almost every cultivated language on the face of the globe'. He regrets that he cannot be in Dublin to meet Cobbett, but urges Dwyer 'as secretary to the late Catholic Association' to organize a public dinner at which Cobbett 'may receive the respectful attention of the sincere friends of civil and religious liberty'.[61] Comparing their respective contributions to the cause of Emancipation, Cobbett admits that his *History of the Reformation* partly 'broke down the prejudices of the people of England.' But it was O'Connell's 'personal exertions and personal influence, amidst personal perils of every description, that

brought the question to a speedy issue, and compelled its enemies to give way'.[62] No wonder *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* paired Cobbett and O'Connell together.[63]

The two men differed over poor relief. The *Political Register* waged an unremitting war against the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act, and instead recommended extending the old-style English poor-relief system to Ireland.[64] O'Connell, speaking in Dublin in January 1832, disagreed. He considered it 'impossible to introduce the poor laws here without *enslaving and degrading the poor*.' He favoured poor relief for the sick and disabled, but was against 'any interference with the rates of wages'. Cobbett reprinted O'Connell's Dublin speech in 25 pages of text, before deciding that 'the far greater part of your *facts*, as they stand here, are founded in error; and that the whole of your arguments are fallacious…'.[65] Cobbett gave three lectures of his own in Dublin in the autumn of 1834. Pointing to the tragic paradox of seeing 'a country teeming with food' and its 'people starving and in rags', he repeated his assertion in Parliament that there could not long be peace or tranquillity 'amongst the eight millions held as a colony by the ten or twelve millions'.[66] Although he favoured Repeal of the Union, he warned his Irish audience that 'the whole of this misery could not be removed by what you look for, a national Parliament'. In another Dublin lecture he rejected the claim that the Union could not be repealed: 'We can find five hundred Acts of Parliament in which Magna Carta has been repealed in part'. And if Ireland was to be governed from Westminster, why did she not have more representatives? Cobbett noted that, in a *reformed* House of Commons, three English counties (Bedfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire) had a combined population of 386,000 – only marginally greater than the 366,000 in Co. Mayo. Yet the three English counties returned 24 Members of Parliament while 'the County of Mayo has but two!' What security could there be for England 'while a population like that of this kingdom is thus treated?'[67]

Revealing how much of Britain's national debt arose from wars in which Ireland had no strategic interest, Cobbett turns to Pitt's war against revolutionary France:

> What was that war undertaken for? What was acknowledged by those who carried on that war – by the Duke of Portland, Lord Spencer and another nobleman when they joined Mr Pitt to carry on that war? They declared they entered into the war that the nobility and the established church should not be overthrown. The French had abolished tithes, and if we do not put them down, the Irish might abolish tithes.

After condemning as unconstitutional the action of landlords in forcing their tenants ('the King's subjects') to emigrate on pain of starvation, Cobbett ends by asserting that he does not think England has 'a right to preserve her greatness at the expense of the happiness of Ireland'. It would be 'for the good of England as well as Ireland that a repeal of the Union should take place.'[68]

Cobbett died in June 1835, and the *Weekly Political Register* died with him. A year later, with the Whigs back in office after Peel's 'Hundred Days', O'Connell made an impassioned speech in the Commons, demanding 'equal justice for Ireland' – again to no avail.[69] The accession of Victoria in 1837 restored O'Connell's optimism. He wrote to the secretary of his newly founded General Association for Ireland:

> Ireland is now prepared to amalgamate with the entire empire. We are prepared for full and perpetual conciliation. Let Cork county and Yorkshire be put on a footing – let Ireland and England be identified. But for this purpose equality – of rights, laws and liberties – is essentially necessary. We desire no more, we will not take less. A real effectual union, or no union – such is the alternative.[70]

The General Association had two objectives: complete municipal reform in Ireland and a satisfactory solution to the tithe question – both to be obtained by peaceful means. The Whig ministry's attempted legislation on both questions was obstructed by the House of Lords, and when the 1840s brought Peel to the post of Prime Minister, the respective merits of peaceful and revolutionary methods of abrogating the Union would again be canvassed.

In 1841 O'Connell published his *Memoir on Ireland*, dedicated to the Queen. Arranged in chronological sections, it began with the period 1172–1612. But the ninth chapter covering 1829–40 began with the stark assertion: 'There never was a people on the face of the earth so cruelly, so basely, so unjustly treated, as the people of Ireland have been by the English Government'.[71] O'Connell argued that the 1832 Reform Bill could not have been carried without the support of the Irish members, yet the Irish were 'still suffering under the ingratitude of the British Reformers – under the consistent injustice of the British Tories'. Like Cobbett, he points to electoral inequity in the allocation of seats, and also to the disparity inherent in the £10 householder franchise when applied to the vastly different property values of London and Dublin.[72] Again echoing Cobbett, he insists that, if the Union had not been carried, 'Ireland would have long since paid off her national debt, and been almost entirely free from taxation'. Instead, in a population of

eight million 'there are two millions, three hundred thousand individuals dependent for subsistence on casual charity!!! And this in one of the most abundantly fertile countries on the globe!'[73]

O'Connell's complaint against Britain was not only the ministers' bad faith in delaying Emancipation, but their failure to settle the grievance of tithes: 'As long as the people of Ireland are compelled to do that which neither the people of England nor the people of Scotland do – that is to support the Church of the minority – so long will the Union continue to be in that respect "a living lie".' And he pictured Ireland's future relationship with the mainland as 'the golden and unonerous link of the Crown – true to the principles of unaffected and genuine allegiance; but determined, while she preserves her loyalty to the British throne, to vindicate her title to constitutional freedom for the Irish people'.[74] The Repeal Association, founded by O'Connell in 1840, relied on the assumption that, as in the Emancipation campaign, an overwhelming demonstration of popular sentiment would force the government's hand. But it was hardly wise to boast of the ease with which weight of numbers had finally extorted Emancipation from an unwilling government.[75] With Peel now established as Prime Minister, O'Connell was elected Lord Mayor of Dublin, following Melbourne's Irish Municipal Act (1841). During his mayoral term, O'Connell held aloof from political campaigning, but in February 1843 he tabled nine propositions before the Council, including the claim that 'the most salutary results and no other' must result from the repeal of the Union. After speaking for four hours, O'Connell carried the vote by 45 to 15. Following the Corporation vote, the monthly 'rent' to the Repeal Association rose from £300 in February to £2000 in May, and to a total of £48,000 for the whole of the year.[76]

O'Connell's tactics remained strenuously non-violent. At Cork on 21 May 1843, as government repression seemed imminent, he declared: 'I will violate no law, I will outrage no ordinance of man nor of Heaven; but as long as there remains to me one inch of the Constitution on which I can place my footstep, I will find some Archimedean point whereon to plant the lever with which I will still uphold the fainting liberties of my country.'[77] He was promptly removed from the magistracy. Yet even when Parliament passed the 1843 Arms Act, requiring the registration of all arms, and substantially reinforced the military forces in Ireland, O'Connell talked only of assembling 300 representatives as a Dublin parliament-in-waiting. His readiness to cancel the banned Clontarf mass meeting in October 1842 did not prevent him and eight others from being charged with con-

spiracy. The prosecution excluded all Catholics from the jury, as well as several liberal Protestants; but although the verdict of guilty was defended in the Commons, the sentence of a fine and 12 months imprisonment was overturned by the House of Lords.[78]

It was later claimed that O'Connell was 'never so powerful as on his release'. Yet the same historian observes that the hope uniting O'Connell's popular support 'was not deliverance from England, but deliverance from their landlords'.[79] Although the enfranchisement of the manufacturing middle classes would force Peel to repeal the Corn Laws, the landed interest in the 1840s was still strong enough to obstruct any steps towards Irish land reform. Not much could be expected from a Landlord and Tenant Commission, appointed in 1844, which consisted wholly of Irish landlords. So despite the triumph of his release, O'Connell was seen to have failed the Irish tenant-farmers. Rhetoric alone would not achieve Repeal. The very success of his Emancipation campaign, and the realization that the post-1832 franchise would produce a Catholic-dominated Irish Parliament, caused Irish Protestants to distrust his Repeal campaign. As an Irish historian remarks, after the Westminster Parliament's repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, passing of Catholic Emancipation, commutation of tithes and reform of the municipal corporations, O'Connell 'looked around for the Repeal Protestants; but they were gone'.[80]

Within the Repeal Association, the Young Ireland party, led by Thomas Osborne Davis, challenged O'Connell's strategy of staying just within constitutional bounds. In 1842 Davis joined with John Blake Dillon and Charles Gavan Duffy in founding Young Ireland's newspaper, the *Nation*, which at first helped O'Connell's cause. But John Mitchel, an early victim of the Treason Felony Act, who joined the editorial staff after Davis's death in 1845, later drew a 'needful and real distinction':

> Old Ireland meant Whiggery and office seeking, and a staff of paid officials to support the influence of Mr O'Connell: Young Ireland meant perfect independence of all British parties, repudiation of offices under any English government, absolute denial of any London law. O'Connell saw plainly that this latter system, if it prevailed, would end in an armed struggle, or an attempt at that; and he saw, too, that such attempt must be futile, while England was at peace.[81]

Young Ireland's resort to violence in the revolutionary year of 1848 would confirm O'Connell's judgement.

9

Violence Re-visited: Young Ireland and '98

Queen Victoria's 1843 Speech from the throne, delivered in person on 24 August, deplored 'the persevering efforts which are being made to stir up discontent and disaffection among my subjects in Ireland, and to excite them to demand a Repeal of the Legislative Union'. While committing the government to administering Ireland 'in a spirit of strict justice and impartiality', her Majesty continued:

> From a deep conviction that the Legislative Union is not less essential to the attainment of those objects than to the strength and stability of the empire, it is my firm determination, with your support, and under the blessing of DIVINE PROVIDENCE, to maintain inviolate that great bond of connexion between the two countries.

It was hardly an encouraging response to O'Connell's optimistic decision to dedicate his *Memoir on Ireland* to the Queen.[1]

O'Connell's cancellation of the Clontarf meeting in October 1842 had already lost him support within the Repeal Association. Yet when Thomas Osborne Davis visited Wolfe Tone's grave in 1843, and helped Tone's widow to mark the spot with a plain black marble stone, it was done privately so as not to embarrass O'Connell. The newly established organ of Young Ireland, the *Nation*, nevertheless published Davis's poem, 'Tone's Grave' in November 1843, with its celebration of promise unfulfilled: 'And I thought how he perished in prison alone/His friends unavenged and his country unfreed.'[2]

O'Connell had sought to distance himself from the United Irishmen – and from his own youthful membership of the Society – in a speech reported by the Dublin press in May 1841:

> As to 1798, we leave the weak and wicked men who considered sanguinary violence as part of their resources for ameliorating our institutions, and the equally wickedly and villainously designing wretches who fomented the rebellion, and made it explode in order that in the defeat of the rebellious attempt, they might be able to extinguish the liberties of Ireland.[3]

The same depiction of the British government as *agent provocateur*, is found in O'Connell's *Memoir on Ireland*: 'The Rebellion of 1798 was almost avowedly, and beyond a doubt provably, fomented to allow the British Government to extinguish the Irish legislative independence, and to bring about the Union.'[4]

By 1843, thanks to the long delay in granting Emancipation, the United Irishness promoted by Drennan, and the heirs of the Volunteer movement, had been transmuted by O'Connell's campaign into Catholic Irishness. The assault on the Union would be a Catholic assault: to that extent, Musgrave would receive retrospective justification. Davis admittedly claimed to seek an Irish nationality 'which may embrace Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter, Milesian and Cromwellian, the Irishman of a hundred generations and the stranger who is within our gates'.[5] And William Daunt, who accompanied O'Connell on the Repeal campaign trail, records the Liberator's observation that 'if justice be not done to Ireland, we must see the resuscitation of the volunteer corps'. If the volunteers were revived, O'Connell is said to have explained, 'I would be colonel of the First Regiment of Dublin Volunteers.' Although a military corps, 'it would yet be a pacific band; its existence would achieve our rights by showing the futility of resisting them'.[6] Such passive mobilization had overawed the Dublin Parliament in 1782, but it could hardly hope to overawe the post-Union imperial Parliament.

For the moment, the *Nation* was content to track O'Connell's triumphal progress. Daunt had witnessed O'Connell's arrival in Limerick, where a crowd estimated at 100,000 had welcomed him with a pageant in which 'Neptune, bearing a trident, and dressed in a sea-green philabeg and sash, occupied a boat which moved along on wheels'.[7] In July 1843 the *Nation* reported a Repeal demonstration at Skibbereen:

'In the town, trees were planted – every window was thrown up. The ladies waved handkerchiefs, the house tops were taken possession of, and a devotion to O'Connell was manifested which has not been surpassed in any town through which he has hitherto gone in triumph.' Having passed through the town, the procession stopped where 'a large and admirably built platform was placed on the ground, and from which many banners waved, and was crowded by clergy and gentry'. The chairman began, 'Fellow countrymen and illustrious Liberator'… He later proposed 'the toast of the evening' to 'O'Connell and the Repeal of the Union'. And under the headline 'Magnificent Repeal Meeting in Galway', O'Connell is reported as claiming that 'the Irish parliament had no more right to transfer their parliament to England than they would to transfer it to France or the Cape of Good Hope'. When the Liberator got to Dundalk, where a petition was approved for a repeal of the Union, the chairman proposed a toast to the Queen, adding optimistically:

> The crown of England was never placed on the brow of one who wished Ireland better the she did. (*Cheers*) It was said the she was to have honoured Ireland with a visit. Oh would that she might do so, and when she landed at Kingstown, the shout of joyous welcome with which she would be greeted would be echoed throughout the land, and she would find that she was quite as secure among her Irish subjects as in the sister isle. (*Cheers*)[8]

The *Nation* that same summer of 1843 carried a promise from Bartholomew O'Connor, secretary of the United Irish Repeal Association of New York, that a donation of £500 was on its way. He referred to 'the atrocious expressions attributed to the English minister that he would prefer a civil war to a repeal of the Union'. This was to say, in effect, that 'he would prefer sending his mercenary legions to butcher and exterminate the Irish people for presuming to demand their undoubted rights'.[9] The *Nation* would soon be reporting the 'Great "Monster" Repeal Meeting on the Hill of Tara'. Recording the huge size of the rally, a leading article announced: 'There were more men present than possessed Scotland when WILLIAM WALLACE raised the standard of independence; or in Athens in the days of her world renown. The British Army at home and abroad, or the armies with which NAPOLEON trod Europe under foot, did not muster as many grown men as gathered round O'CONNELL on that day'. The report continued: 'It was a sight, not grand alone, but appalling – not exciting

merely pride, but *fear* – for they had the steadiness and order of trained men.' They held Ireland's liberties in their hands: 'Their will is irresistible; and any man having a shadow of doubt of their moderation and virtue, must, of necessity, desire to see the awful power they possess quickly transferred to the calmer keeping of a domestic legislature…the choice is between the Senate and the Praetorian Guard.'[10]

It was an intoxicating vision of what mere numbers might achieve. Davis, who had joined with Dillon and Duffy in founding the *Nation*, was the dominant voice of Young Ireland – from 1840, when as a young Dublin barrister he urged Trinity College Historical Society to support Irish historical studies, to his premature death in 1845. His own historical essays were published in the *Citizen*, his attempts to define Irishness appeared in the *Morning Register*, and he would be unfairly lampooned by *Punch* as a man thirsting for blood.[11] Davis himself objected not to O'Connell's determinedly peaceful tactics but to his narrowly Catholic nationalism. As Davis told Madden:

> The Protestants of the lower orders are neutral: the land question and repeated disappointments from England have alienated them from their old views. Most of the educated Protestants now profess an ardent nationality and say that, if some pledge against Catholic Ascendancy could be given them, they too would be repealers.[12]

Davis urged both Catholic and Protestant to 'look narrowly at the causes of these intestine feuds, which have prostrated both in turn before the stranger, and see whether half of what each calls crimes in the other is not his own distrust of his neighbour's ignorance'.[13]

Davis's ideas reached beyond readers of the *Morning Register* through his popular ballads, many of them written for publication in the *Nation*. One of the best known ('A Nation Once Again') recalled in its opening stanza the days when 'boyhood's fire' was in Davis's blood:

> And then I prayed I yet might see
> Our fetters rent in twain
> And Ireland long a province be
> A Nation once again.[14]

Davis's ballads might still inspire Young Ireland, but his death in 1845 changed the character of the movement.[15] William Smith O'Brien, MP for Co. Limerick from 1835 to 1840, broke with the Repeal Association, and in 1847 (the year of O'Connell's own death) established the Irish

Confederation with the able support of Duffy, then aged 30. Duffy later described his own part in the nationalist movement in three works: *Young Ireland 1840–50* (1880–83), *Four years of Irish history* (1883) and *My life in two hemispheres* (1898). His earlier aim has been described as 'to teach Irish history through verse as well as prose in the pages of the *Nation*'.[16] The success of his editorial objectives was hampered by Davis's death, and by disagreements both with O'Connell and with John Mitchel, who took Davis's place on the editorial team. Yet Duffy could claim that, when the Young Ireland deputation visited Belfast in 1847, it received a warmer welcome than O'Connell had done in 1841.[17] That may have been because the city regarded O'Connell as a greater threat. In June 1846 the *Belfast Newsletter* remarked of a public dinner for William Smith O'Brien: 'Mr O'Brien's presence might be endured here, as he is, after all, more silly and harmless than malignant or knavish…but another visit from Mr O'Connell would be an altogether different affair.'[18] And again, a fortnight later: 'Physical force exerted, as the Young Irelanders would exert it, would speedily be prostrated, but the vicious influence of such men as O'Connell, his sons and satellites, will long be felt in the future destinies of Ireland should the Whigs continue much longer in power.'[19]

Young Ireland's eventual resort to military force would end in the fiasco of Boulagh Common, Ballingarry, on 29 July 1848, when the militant miners shrank from blowing up a house where police were holding five children hostage. O'Brien, Dillon and Thomas Francis Meagher, leaders of the planned revolt, had been forestalled by the suspension of *habeas corpus*. They were warned by Catholic clergy that their followers were utterly unprepared, and unsuited to taking on the Royal Irish Constabulary. The so-called the 'cabbage-garden revolution' was easily put down and the leaders arrested – though O'Brien himself was not captured for a week. As the *Illustrated London News* explained, the rebels failed 'because no arms can make an undisciplined rabble, let their enthusiasm be what it may, formidable against armed soldiers or the armed constabulary'. Nor were the Irish Constabulary mere policemen: 'They are the most formidable troops in equipment, drill, physical ability, experience and self-reliance in her Majesty's service.'[20] *The Times*, noting that 'the 51st Irish rebellion' had failed 'like all the rest', observed that the southern Constabulary were chiefly Catholics. It was a 'victory of Irishmen over Irishmen, Papists over Papists, and is therefore happily unembittered with religious or national jealousies'. The example of 1798, when 'the bodies of those shot in open insurrection had been gibbeted', was not followed. The authorities had acted firmly,

'though perhaps with more attention to the decencies of civilized life'.[21] Yet the Whig ministry in London, thinking itself threatened by its own Chartist rebels, may have deliberately magnified the threat of rebellion in Ireland. Irish regiments were replaced by English, and the government seems briefly to have flirted with the Orange order.[22]

O'Brien was charged with high treason, and sentenced to be hanged, drawn and quartered, though this harsh sentence was later commuted to transportation. The echoes of 1798 were no mere coincidence. The Young Irelanders professed to have drawn inspiration from the United Irishmen of half-a-century before. Among the ballads reprinted in *Spirit of the Nation* were 'Song of the United Irishmen' and 'Who fears to speak of Ninety-eight?'[23] Young Ireland's parades through the streets of Dublin, and advertisements for pike-heads at the time of O'Brien's trial, had more of imitation than insurrection about them. Yet the link with 1798 had been reinforced by the publication of the first two volumes of Madden's *United Irishmen* in 1842, with further volumes appearing until 1846. Concluding his survey in the 1842 edition, before embarking on decidedly partisan portrayals of individual rebels, Madden makes this disclaimer:

> It is not my purpose to take away an iota from the infamy which belongs to the excesses of the insurgents. My object is to put it out of the power of either party ever to recur to such enormities; to show the members of a partizan administration, (if ever there should, unfortunately for Ireland, be one in power there, like that of 1798) that a cruel and remorseless policy, whatever efforts may be made to counter its wickedness, sooner or later will be brought to light, and its author reprobated by all good men.

Madden seems to echo O'Connell's 1841 assessment.[24] Yet the author's 1842 introduction signalled a mission of attempted rehabilitation: 'It remains as a task to do justice to the United Irishmen, to point out the wrongs by which they were goaded to resistance, the nature of the political evils they desired to remove from their suffering country, the good at which they aimed, and the errors into which they were betrayed.'[25]

Madden was a medical man, who would in his late 50s become a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons. Born in the year of the Rebellion, he was reliant on documentary sources and the recollections of survivors, many of whom wished to live down their revolutionary past.[26] Madden's printed sources include Sir Jonah Barrington

('whose political tendencies were certainly not on the side of the insurgents'), Rev. James Gordon, the informer Thomas Reynolds, Charles Teeling, Lord Moira – and Sir Richard Musgrave. Some 50 pages of appendices, in the 1842 edition, cite documents confined to the years 1791–93.[27] Madden seeks to discredit the claim that 1798 had been a sectarian struggle. One appendix lists the religious affiliations of 103 'leading members of the United Irish Society, or persons suspected of so being'. Although the 38 laymen of the Established Church outnumber both Presbyterian (33) and Catholic (32) laymen, no Anglican clergy appear in the list. The tally for both Presbyterian ministers and Catholic priests is 12 apiece, of which six Catholic priests and three Presbyterian ministers were executed.[28] The list of names includes those active in the rebellion, as well as 'originators and organizers of it'; and Madden shows that among the 'organizing leaders', the numbers of Protestants compared with the numbers of Catholics 'are in the proportion of about four to one'. He concludes: 'There never was a greater mistake than to call the struggle a Papist rebellion: the movement was predominantly a Protestant one.[29]

Emphasizing the non-sectarian context in which the movement developed, Madden sees the essential strength of the Volunteers as 'the union of Catholic, Protestant and Presbyterian', and considers that 'the reader need not look further for the origin of the "United Irishmen".' Rather than recognize this identity of purpose (Madden complains) 'it is the fashion to assert there was nothing but loyalty and the fear of French invasion amongst the Volunteers, and only treason, and the influence of French politics, in the principles of the United Irishmen'.[30] In Madden's view, the Volunteers dissipated their efforts in obtaining nominal independence, which 'had precluded its successful employment in the struggle for reform'.[31] His epitaph on the Volunteers exhibits the movement's contradictions:

> It combined in one great national phalanx, the talent, the chivalry, the extravagance, the prodigality, the embarrassment, the republicanism and patriotism, for one brief epoch, of all ranks and classes. The world never saw an army of such heterogeneous material collected from all conflicting parties, for a patriotic purpose.[32]

Madden concludes that 'the services of the Volunteers are, on the whole, greatly exaggerated by our historians; the great wonder is, how little substantial good to Ireland was effected by a body which was capable of effecting so much'.[33] But this does not diminish Madden's

conviction that the experience of the Volunteer associations explains the rise of the United Irishmen.

In September 1783, the Dungannon Convention of Volunteers had considered it a patriotic duty, 'to promote, as far as our example can reach, an affectionate coalition of the inhabitants of Ireland'.[34] Madden reprints the declarations and resolutions of the first general meeting of the Belfast United Irishmen in October 1791. Besides the famous assertion that 'the great measure essential to the prosperity and freedom of Ireland was *an equal representation of all the people of Ireland*', the declaration pledged the Society to maintain that constitutional balance between Ireland and Great Britain 'which is essential to the preservation of our liberties and the extension of our commerce'. And it insisted that 'no reform is just which does not include Irishmen of every religious persuasion'.[35] But Madden also notices the change which had come over the United Irishmen by 1794. The Society's original test was turned into 'an oath of secrecy and fidelity', while the Society's original objects – reform and emancipation – 'were now merged in aims amounting to revolution and the establishment of a republican government'. The change in emphasis was not advertised (says Madden) 'as a great number of the members, and even of the leaders, were not prepared to travel beyond the Hounslow of reformation'.[36] He thinks the post-1793 organization of the United Irishmen savoured 'too much of political economy – too little of knowledge of human nature'.[37]

The military organization of the United Irishmen, Madden decides, was engrafted on its civil structure 'in Ulster at the end of 1796, and in Leinster at the beginning of 1797'.[38] He puts the first suggestion of the use of force (endorsed by Thomas Addis Emmet and Thomas Russell) in May 1795 – soon after Jackson's trial in April – and the first collusion with the French Directory in May 1796. He notes, however, that there was talk of enlisting French assistance, through contacts with the French minister in Philadelphia, as early as the eve of Tone's departure for America in May 1795. And he is satisfied that Tone had recognized the need for Ireland's separation from Britain as early as 1790.[39] Madden's general narrative includes an account of Tone's departure from the United States for France in an American vessel, his eventual success in persuading the French to send a fleet to Ireland, and his frustration at being anchored in Bantry Bay for five days, vainly waiting for Hoche to catch up with his squadron. And perhaps with one eye on politicians of the 1840s and the age of steam, Madden suggests: 'Had steam vessels been at that time in use, the expedition would not have

failed; or in other words, 15,000 Frenchmen would have landed with arms sufficient for the array of an immense population.' Protestant winds – 'the only unsubsidized allies of England' – could not then have so favoured the royal navy.[40]

However much the charge of hagiography may be levelled at Madden's biographical accounts of individual United Irishmen, his general analysis is more balanced. Yet he does perpetuate the claim that the government fomented the rebellion in order to carry the Union. He points to Lord Clare's admission in the House of Lords in 1801 that the United Irishmen who negotiated with the Castle administration in 1798 had disclosed nothing that the King's ministers did not already know. Why then was the conspiracy allowed to go on? Madden answers: 'To promote rebellion, for the purpose of breaking down the strength of the country, in order to effect the unpopular measure of the Union.' And he cites Carnot's conversation with MacNeven in August 1797, alleging that the French Directory knew 'that a Union was Pitt's object, in his vexatious treatment of Ireland'.[41] The last of Madden's biographical sketches of United Irishmen would not appear until 1846. But the narrative volume, together with the first volume of individual memoirs, was in circulation by 1843. It is not difficult to see why Wolfe Tone was so readily adopted by the Repealers of the 1840s.

Madden's memoirs of the United Irishmen ensured that the ill-starred agitation to repeal the Union would be conducted against the rhetorical background of interpretations of 1798. Madden wrote:

> The intemperate zeal of Sir Richard Musgrave, the unscrupulous advocate of Lord Castlereagh's policy (for it was his government chiefly, in the months of May and June, when those tortures were inflicted), carried him to the extent, of not only attributing the suppression of the rebellion to the use of torture, but even of defending it on the authority of no less a person than the humane and enlightened Marquess of Beccaria.

Musgrave did not cite Beccaria's sardonic condemnation of the use of torture, as quoted by Madden: 'To discover truth by this method, is a problem which may be better solved by a mathematician, than by a judge, and it may be thus stated, the force of the muscles and the sensibility of the nerves of an innocent person being given, it is required to find the degree of pain necessary to make him confess himself guilty of a crime'. But in any case the appeal to Beccaria was unnecessary:

'Blackstone might have informed Lord Clare, when he acknowledged its employment, or Musgrave when he defended its infliction, that "the trial by rack is utterly unknown to the law of England".' And Madden concludes: 'The sentiments of Sir Richard Musgrave are unfortunately still those of a great portion of his party in Ireland.'[42]

The first two volumes of Madden's *United Irishmen* hardly appeared before the Establishment view was forcefully re-asserted by Montgomery Martin's *Ireland before and after the union* (1843). The preface reprints (over five pages) the *Address to the inhabitants of the countries subject to the British crown* issued from the Corn Exchange, Dublin, 13 September 1843, and signed by O'Connell. Martin comments:

> England stands charged before the civilised world with having conquered Ireland, and destroyed its independence as a kingdom; with having practised the most cruel oppressions towards Ireland for seven centuries; and with having iniquitously contrived, by 'demoniac, fraudulent and corrupt measures', a Legislative Union between Great Britain and Ireland, which has produced '*misery, wretchedness, exhaustion and destitution; and which has diffused throughout the nation want and woe; bitter discontent and heart-rending sorrow*'.

Martin also cites the claim that '*the consummation of such crimes, up to the close of the last century, is to be found in the atrocious manner in which the Legislative Union between both countries was effected*'. To counter such accusations, the author proposes 'to inquire calmly, without acrimony, and with an anxious solicitude for the discovery of truth, into the accuracy of these charges'. He will present every relevant fact, and, 'without any imputation on the motives or conduct of those who are in favour of a Repeal of the Union', will leave the case in the hands of public opinion for unbiased and final adjudication'.[43]

Montgomery Martin dedicated his work to Peel, explaining his intention of demonstrating that 'whatever evils may exist in Ireland, those evils cannot be ascribed to the Legislative union of 1800, which has been the means of conferring vast and incalculable benefits on Ireland'. Quoting phrases in defence of the Union from Peel's parliamentary speeches of 8 February 1830 and 25 February 1834, Martin concludes: 'The question does not affect Ireland alone: it involves in its fate the Monarchy, and our widely extended dominions; it includes the Reformed faith, and the Aristocracy of the realm – and it embraces the rights of Property, and the preservation of social order throughout the whole Kingdom.'[44] Martin's mode of argument is

reminiscent of Musgrave's. In order to 'illustrate the effect of the Romish intrigues', he would refer to earlier rebellions 'whose histories prove that these insurrections did not arise from what has been unjustly called "Protestant bigotry".' At the same time he would demonstrate that 'the confiscations which took place were the inevitable result of treason, on the broadest and most dangerous scale'.[45] He claims to show that 'the language of the rebels in 1641 was similar to the Repeal language of the present day'. Such was also the case in the 1798 Rebellion, 'which was organizing for seven years before it broke out in open violence against the government'. The United Irishmen had been founded 'with the *ostensible* object of Parliamentary reform and Catholic Emancipation; beneath these objects was the intended establishment of an *Irish Republic*; which was subsequently openly avowed'.[46]

From the example of the United Irishmen, whose 'original Civil organization could be converted into military array under their respective leaders', it was clearly indispensable that O'Connell's 'treasonable combination' – the Repeal Association – should be 'finally crushed'. There could be 'no amelioration attempted until this hotbed of sedition be suppressed, and its wily and artful leaders imprisoned or banished'. No government 'in Europe or America, past or present' would tolerate the system of religious agitation which had been pursued in Ireland for the past ten years, and which 'if continued, will render civil war, however sanguinary, preferable to the loyal and well-disposed part of Ireland'. Martin concludes: 'No sane person would for a moment permit an incendiary or a madman to go through his house with a lighted torch in his hand, crying 'PEACE, PEACE – TRANQUILLITY, TRANQUILLITY!' Any minister who would any longer 'tolerate this treasonable or insane incendiarism, would betray his trust to the Crown, and connive at the inevitable dismemberment and destruction of the British Empire'.[47]

The major Establishment monthlies do not seem to have noticed either Madden or Martin, but the *Quarterly Review* for September 1843 devoted 30 pages to Repeal and Young Ireland. The *Quarterly* begins with a *verbatim* extract from the *Gentleman's Magazine*:

> We apprehend that Ireland is rapidly approaching to a crisis that must speedily end either in convulsion, as the inevitable consequence of agitation, or the removal, by prompt measures, of the agitation. The treachery of O'Connell and his party is now admitted by the warmest advocates of Catholic Emancipation. Emancipation,

> which has strengthened O'Connell's hands, is used as an instrument of fresh disturbances; and, with a perfidy that disentitles him to the confidence of his own sycophants, he now presses onward to a *dissolution of the bond* that unites these islands.[48]

The *Quarterly* makes the neat debating point that those words were written in 1831 'in the first months of Lord Grey's administration'. In the same issue, the *Quarterly* prints a chronological account of the varied stages of O'Connell's agitation since Emancipation, together with the bewildering succession of names he adopted for his Repeal organizations, culminating in the addition of 'Loyal' to the National Repeal Association. A matching chronology of parliamentary statements and ministerial actions is given for the same period, including Lord Ebrington's alleged observation on 7 February 1833, that 'though he had the greatest horror and dread of *civil war*, still he would *prefer it* to a Repeal of the Union'. Spring Rice's riposte to O'Connell is also quoted: 'I told the honourable gentleman what I will now emphatically repeat, namely, that the question of the Repeal of the Union is the question of separation between England and Ireland – that the question of separation involves the destruction of the British monarchy, and the setting up in its stead in Ireland a ferocious Republic of the worst kind.'[49]

To those who asked why the Repeal meetings of the 1840s had not been put down by the government, the *Quarterly Review* responds that 'mere numbers are not in themselves illegal: 500,000 persons, for instance, assembled to see the ascent of a balloon, would not be an illegal assembly'. If numbers alone constituted illegality, there would be no remedy but to disperse by force O'Connell's ostensibly peaceful and well-disciplined assemblies. 'And can anyone contemplate, without horror', the consequence of any attempt 'to disperse even the smallest of those meetings by *force*?'[50] The *Quarterly* does not defend O'Connell's tactics, but, as the public peace was not immediately threatened, it believes that Peel's ministry had adopted the right policy: 'that is to develop and hold in readiness their existing powers', while avoiding 'as long as possible, the inflammatory effects of a parliamentary agitation on new measures of coercion'. Such measures might well be necessary when 'one strong and universal opinion of Great Britain shall leave the Government no option'. The *Quarterly* sees no immediate prospect of bloodshed, and is satisfied that 'the ultimate danger of the agitation's effecting its object is altogether visionary'. The cause defended by upholders of the Union was just – 'the cause,

we mean of the British Empire – against Mr O'Connell and the priests, and the ignorant and deluded people whom they have, we trust, rather distracted than perverted'.[51]

Convinced that 'nothing short of entire and absolute *national independence* will satisfy Ireland', the *Quarterly Review* offers readers, 'rather for their amusement than from any necessity of illustrating so clear a case', some samples of nationalist poetry. Describing the *Nation* as 'the most violent as well as the most able of all the organs of agitation', the *Quarterly* first prints a prose excerpt addressed to England, and concluding: '…we would spurn your gifts, if the condition were that Ireland should remain a province. We tell you, and all whom it may concern, come what may – bribery or deceit, justice, policy or WAR – we tell you, in the name of Ireland, that *Ireland shall be a* NATION'.[52] The review also notices the newly published collection of the *Nation*'s patriotic ballads 'in a small volume under the title of the *Spirit of the Nation* – with a vignette emblem of the harp *without the Crown*'. Among those selected by the reviewer is 'Ourselves Alone', with its closing stanza:

The foolish word 'impossible',
  At once for aye disdain;
No power can bar a people's will
  A people's right to gain.
Be bold, united, firmly set,
  Nor flinch in word or tone –
We'll be a glorious *nation* yet,
  REDEEMED – ERECT – ALONE.

The 'Song of the United Irishmen', with its salute to 'the colour of the martyred dead – our own immortal green', is also quoted. The *Quarterly* comments: 'We need hardl*y* remind our readers that *green* was the colour of the United Irishmen, while that of the *Kingdom of Ireland* is blue – heraldically; on a field *azure*, a harp *or*'. Concluding with two stanzas from 'Irish War Song, 1843', the reviewer spares his readers 'more incendiary and less clever ravings about Irish valour, Irish victory, and Irish *vengeance* – contrasted with Saxon crime, and Saxon defeat, all inciting the people to rise in unremitting and relentless war –

Till thy waves, Lordly Shannon, all crimsonly flow
Like the billows of Hell with the blood of the foe![53]

Young Irishmen John Mitchel would later argue that the movement's transition, from an inspirational initiative in prose and poetry to an actual attempt at armed insurrection, was a reaction to the horrors of the Great Famine:

> If the sight of such agonies and atrocities did at length drive some Irishmen to desperation, it is not much to be wondered at. None of our countrymen in that day was more calm and moderate, more conscientious, more averse from wanton bloodshed, than Wm. Smith O'Brien; not one more gentle and forgiving, more attached to order than John Martin or the late John Dillon; yet the irresistible course of events, and the unnatural horrors which their own eyes beheld, did at length drive even these men to counsel an armed insurrection against the desolating British power.[54]

But famine years are not the best in which to launch a rebellion: like Napoleon's armies, rebels need to march on a full stomach. A detailed analysis of the Great Famine lies outside the scope of this study. A catastrophe on such a scale was probably beyond the administrative capabilities of any nineteenth-century government. Peel had taken sensible precautions by the secret importation and storage of Indian corn, and by August 1847 three million people were being fed daily by the state – though the government unrealistically expected the cost to be recouped through the local poor rate.[55] The Irish workhouses, which had been constructed with a capacity of 80,000, were estimated (in the census of March 1851) to contain three times that number. Typhus and dysentery killed more than starvation, while even the provision of paid public works resulted in deaths among the undernourished, who, thanks to their potato-growing economy, were unused to winter work.[56]

In 1847 Mitchel offered an eye-witness description of 'these Golgothas that border our island with a ring of death from Cork Harbour all round to Lough Foyle'. It reads:

> There is no need of inquiries here – no need of words; the history of this little society is plain before us. Yet we go forward, though with sick hearts and swimming eyes, to examine the Place of Skulls nearer. There is a horrible silence, grass grows before the doors; we fear to look into any door, though they are all open or off their hinges; for we fear to see yellow chapless skeletons grinning there; but our footfalls arouse two lean dogs, that run from us with doleful

> howling, and we know by the felon-gleam in the wolfish eyes how they have lived after their master died.[57]

Mitchel's highly charged prose hardly seems exaggerated against the background of official reports. Yet he did contribute to fixing a damaging myth on his countrymen's collective memory of the famine. In his *Jail Journal*, published in 1854 soon after his escape to America, he claimed that the British government could have prevented the disaster: 'In every one of those years, '46, '47, '48, Ireland was exporting to England food to the value of £15 million, and had on her own soil at each harvest, good and ample provision for double her population, notwithstanding the potato blight'. This claim persisted in spite of food imports to Ireland for the years 1846–50 actually being double the volume of food exported.[58]

Yet official actions and attitudes fed the myths, largely because the mass evictions consequent upon unpaid rents were evidently in the interests of the landowning aristocracy which so dominated Russell's cabinet. Sir William Gregory's notorious clause (stipulating that no family holding more than a quarter of an acre of land, could obtain poor relief until they had given up their land) would be remembered a generation later – but few Irish MPs opposed it at the time.[59] As early as 1846, Charles Trevelyan (Assistant Secretary to the Treasury), while claiming that his purchases were 'carried to the utmost point, short of transferring the famine from Ireland to England', suggested that the famine had supplied a solution to Ireland's social ills – not least its system of land tenure. He wrote: 'I hope I am not guilty of irreverence in thinking that this being altogether beyond the power of man, the cure has been applied by the direct stroke of an all wise Providence in a manner as unexpected and unthought of as it is likely to be effectual.'[60] Historians argue about the number of evictions. Tim O'Neill has focused attention on comparative figures for ejection orders entered in the records, as opposed to those actually served. But his figure for actual evictions between 1846 and 1849 comes to more than 140,000 families, amounting to over half a million individuals.[61] Unlike the experience of evictions on such a scale, which would be lodged in Irish folklore, Trevelyan's views, expressed in official correspondence, would not have been noticed at the time. But the correspondence columns of *The Times* reveal the persistent view that Ireland's troubles were the fault of her improvident people. One letter, in 1846, asserted that 'the prejudices and ignorance of the Irish people are at least as inveterate and as fatal as

their misgovernment and the ill example of their superiors'. And the writer claimed more explicitly that the great aim of the Irish peasant was 'to rent a miserable patch of land, to build himself a hovel or burrow in the earth, to marry, and if possible to live as well as his pig.' The letter concludes: 'I verily believe that if the Irish potato famine were to continue for five years longer, it would prove a greater blessing to the country than any that has been devised by parliamentary commissions from the Union to the present time'[62]

In terms of the agrarian economy, that may have been the sober truth. But Mitchel's stark claim, that 'the Almighty indeed sent the potato blight, but the English created the Famine', would echo down the generations from the dispossessed survivors who reached America.[63]

10
Gladstone, Fenians and Disestablishment

John Mitchel's insistence that the British government was to blame for the Irish famine is echoed in one modern historian's confident assertion that the prohibition of food exports from Ireland in the mid-1840s 'would have saved tens, perhaps hundreds of thousands of lives'. John Newsinger's judgement is that 'a million people died because government relief measures were too little and too late'. It was not that the Whigs' free trade ideology constricted the range of options, but 'rather that the Famine did not affect their interests sufficiently for them to change their ideas'. And he endorses Mitchel's observation that the Viceroy, while 'presiding over the starvation of rural Ireland also presides over the social life of Dublin'.[1] The question is whether the Famine, and its surrounding myths, mark a shift to a secular Irish nationalism in which the sectarian disputes of the previous half-century find no echo.

The Famine and its aftermath undoubtedly ended the campaign for Repeal of the Union as orchestrated by O'Connell. As Comerford remarks, 'The famine provided not an argument in favour of self-government, but several devastating arguments against it.'[2] Comerford and Newsinger both emphasize discontinuity. Newsinger writes: 'The O'Neill rebellion of the 1590s, the great rebellion of the 1640s, the United Irish rebellion of the 1790s and the Fenian movement of the 1860s have very little in common with one another, and are certainly not part of a continuous movement of resistance to British rule.' The Fenians might look back to Wolfe Tone, 'but their movement was very different from the movement he had addressed, and the Ireland they hoped to liberate was very different from the Ireland he had intended to set free'.[3] The Fenian programme of violence, in furtherance of non-sectarian goals, was certainly in marked contrast to O'Connell's peaceful promotion of the Catholic political cause. But Young Ireland

provided individual personal links with Fenianism, while Mitchel chose to call his short-lived journal, launched in February 1848, the *United Irishman*. In March 1848, in a seemingly conscious imitation of the 1790s, O'Brien led a Young Ireland delegation to Paris; but the new French Republic, unlike its predecessor, was not at war with Britain. And when in 1853 Mitchel escaped from Van Dieman's Land, and arrived in New York, he sought arms for Ireland from the Russian ambassador, as France was England's ally in the Crimean War.[4]

Yet in one respect the Famine did temporarily have a disjunctive effect. The scale of the tragedy had pushed into the background the extraordinary outburst of English anti-Catholicism provoked by Peel's proposal in 1845 to increase the government grant to Maynooth College. The 'No-popery' agitation in England, triggered by the Maynooth grant issue, would soon re-surface in protests over the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill (1851), the Disestablishment of the Irish Church (1869) and the Decree of Papal Infallibility (1870). In all four episodes, Gladstone would play a leading role. Peel's decision not only to increase, but to make permanent the annual Maynooth grant raised an acrimonious debate on the relationship between church and state. It was a subject that Gladstone had addressed in his *State in its relations with the Church*, first published in 1838, and reaching its fourth edition in 1841.[5] On the very first page, Gladstone wrote: 'The Romanist (with some exceptions), in order to erect his own structure of faith and discipline, now seems to aim first at the demolition of any other, and to deem us so involved in fatal error that we must pass through the zero of national infidelity in order to arrive at the truth.'[6] Gladstone pays tribute to Coleridge's *On the Constitution of the Church and State* (1830), quoting its description of an established church as 'the sustaining, correcting, befriending opposite of the world, the compensating counterforce to the inherent and inevitable defects of the State as State'.[7]

Like Coleridge, Gladstone makes few concessions to his readers. He quotes Burke's assertion that, for Englishmen, 'Church and State are ideas inseparable in their minds, and scarcely is the one mentioned without mentioning the other'.[8] And he invokes the candid testimony of Bishop Warburton in his *Alliance between Church and State* (1736) that religion was needed to reinforce the sanctions of civil society.[9] As for disestablishment, Gladstone concludes, 'nothing can be more impractical, nothing more visionary'.[10] But in words soon to seem prophetic, he insists that establishments must prove themselves: 'For if religion be injured by the national establishment of the Church, it must forthwith and at whatever hazard be disestablished.'[11]

Gladstone resigned from Peel's ministry in 1845, because he *agreed* with the Prime Minister's pragmatic decision to make the Maynooth grant permanent – in contradiction of what he had himself argued in writing on church-state relations. If the grant increase had gone through without sparking a national debate, 'it would still have been a step in a great constitutional change: from the confessional state of the early nineteenth century to the liberal state of the early twentieth century'.[12] Even Protestant Dissenters felt obliged to defend the Anglican establishment. The editor of the *Congregational Magazine* wrote that an essentially Protestant country 'cannot with any consistency educate a Romish priesthood'.[13] Yet the *Quarterly Review*, in contrast to its stance on ecclesiastical titles six years later, welcomed the grant as a precedent for its strongly urged proposal to pay a state stipend to the Irish Catholic clergy.[14] The *Quarterly* makes clear, however, that it remains committed to 'the maintenance of the Established Church in its property, its authority and its integrity; and more particularly of the Irish branch, which from its position has to bear the first brunt and most prominent share of the common danger'. Yet the question remained whether, after Emancipation (1829), parliamentary reform (1832) and municipal reform (1840), had given Irish Catholics 'plenitude of political power', it was 'reasonable or politic or *possible* to treat the only spiritual and moral guide of one-third of our own population, and of nine-tenths of Christendom, as a mischievous and incorrigible superstition, which the State ought not to recognize'.[15] The *Quarterly* argues that 'at the Union we took Ireland *with all her commitments*' – one of which was 'the Royal College of St Patrick at Maynooth'. Even Spencer Perceval had reluctantly admitted in 1808 that he thought Parliament 'PLEDGED *to the support of the institution* by the Union'.[16]

The *Quarterly Review* ends its June 1845 survey with a generous statement of the need for government funding of Irish education. As to whether it was appropriate to 'drain the purses and burthen the consciences of a Protestant people' by using English taxes to support a Catholic seminary, the reviewer responds: '*First*, because we are *not* a Protestant people. We are an Anglican, and Presbyterian and Roman Catholic people.' The state is 'the guardian of all its children'. The state educates 'the Hindoos and Mahometans all over India, as we have already shown, but is forbidden, it seems, to educate Roman Catholics at home'.[17] Before 1845 was out, John Henry Newman had been received into the Catholic Church. The *British Critic*, for half-a-century the champion of the Establishment had been captured by the

Tractarians. Newman was editor from 1838 to 1841, and was succeeded by his brother-in-law. When he in turn resigned in 1843, after he temporarily contemplated following Newman's example, the *British Critic* folded. The *Quarterly*, already beginning to fill the vacuum, was provoked into a more belligerent stance by the Papal rescript of 1850, creating a Catholic hierarchy in England. The *Quarterly* had already pointed to the blatant disregard in Ireland of the Emancipation Act, which prohibited Catholic prelates from assuming the titles of any see of the Established Church. Now, it seemed, the Pope intended to prove his power and authority 'here in England itself, by erecting those ecclesiastical offices, heretofore tolerated under the modest and sufficient title of Vicars Apostolic, into the dignities of Archbishops and Bishops'. These 'new and extraordinary pretensions' cannot but remind the Queen that there lives in Italy 'the lineal heir to the British Crown, excluded only by those very laws which her ministers are every day setting or permitting to be set at defiance'.[18]

Such alarmist protests colour the *Quarterly*'s long review of *Outlines of the History of Ireland* (Dublin, 1847). The Irish policies of both Whig and Tory governments are attacked as 'conciliating demagogues and fondling agitation'. In its search, 'even at some risk' for an 'entirely different and *alternative* system', the *Quarterly* reviews Irish politics since the 1780s. The Irish declaration of independence in the crisis of the 'Gallo-American war', had asserted 'a principle of physical and political equality between the countries which did not exist in reason or nature'. The French Revolution 'created a Jacobin and republican party in Ireland that menaced the integrity of the British Empire', leaving 'no alternative between hostile separation and entire amalgamation'. Since the Union, the evidence of parliamentary debates, parliamentary statutes and 'every species of historical evidence' showed that the Imperial Parliament had not only 'devoted itself to Irish affairs with indefatigable patience, industry and liberality', but had displayed 'an undue preference for Ireland'. Meanwhile for 40 years past, illegal associations had defied the law, and no ministry had 'dared either to do its duty or to tell us honestly why it did not'.[19]

The public indignation at the publication of the papal rescript in 1850 prompted *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* to mark the first 50 years of the Union with an article entitled 'Popery in the nineteenth century'. Objecting to such Catholic doctrines as 'Mass-worship', infallibility, invocation of the saints, and transubstantiation, the writer welcomes the fact that the papal action had 'awakened the intelligent authority of the English bar'. Noticing Samuel Warren's *The Queen or*

the Pope?, the review allots a full column to an extended extract from Warren's pamphlet, concluding: 'The question then – "The Queen or the Pope?" – is a momentous one, which we have been very insolently challenged to answer. The whole matter, social, political and religious, is gathered up into those few words; and posterity will sit in judgment on our mode of answering that question.'[20] Warren's pamphlet recalls the words required of Catholics under the 1829 Act:

> I disclaim, disavow, and solemnly abjure *any intention to subvert the present Church Establishment* as settled by law within this realm, and I solemnly swear that *I will never exercise any privilege*, to which I am or may be entitled, to *disturb or weaken* the Protestant religion or Protestant government in the United Kingdom.[21]

As the *Quarterly* had done in 1845, *Blackwood's* harks back to Pitt, quoting his last speech in the Commons when he explained that he never thought that 'it would have been wise to throw down rudely the guards and fences of the Constitution'. But had Catholic Emancipation been adopted, he thought that 'it *ought* to have been accompanied by those checks and guards, and with every regulation which could have given respect and influence to the Established Church, to the support and protection of the Protestant interest, and to the encouragement of every measure which could tend to propagate the example of the Protestant religion'.[22]

Three months later, under the heading 'Papal Aggression', *Blackwood's* reviewer takes his readers back beyond the Act of Union to what he calls 'the Irish Rebellion of 1795':

> Many of us remember the first French Revolution to say nothing of very recent most crucial revolutions. By the Report of the Secret Committee of the House of Lords in 1797, it appears it was decided by the conspirators that all persons, who from their principles and situation may be deemed inimical to the conspiracy should be massacred, and the first proscribed list was calculated by one of their leaders at 30 000 persons.

The reviewer does not wish to 'dwell upon these atrocities', but to urge those who speak so confidently of 'altered "times and circumstances",' to consider 'what times they have lived in and are living in'.[23] *Blackwood's* suggests that the government should require priests 'who have sworn allegiance to a foreign potentate' to register as aliens, and should

(ideally) abrogate Catholic Emancipation, 'seeing that it was a compact broken by one of the contracting parties'. The reviewer recognizes that such a policy is unrealizable politically, though it might happen one day – 'after, perhaps, frightful rebellions'. Meanwhile the 'whole system of government is on another principle – it is called a "liberal" one'.[24]

In 1850 violent scenes occurred in England, when Guy Fawkes night acquired an added topicality. The Pope, Cardinal Wiseman, Jesuits and various Catholic dignitaries were burned in effigy. Anglican clergy may have given their parishioners some encouragement. A Walthamstow curate explained the 'urgent and particular reason' for celebrating the occasion:

> The advance of Popery in this land, ever since the concessions made to the appeals of the Romanists; the failure of such concessions in accomplishing the declared anticipated good; the troubles of the late attempted rebellion in Ireland; the opposition offered by the Romish priests to all endeavoure to instruct and enlighten the population, the manifest judgments of God upon us in the famine, and the cholera…[25]

Lord John Russell's letter to the Bishop of Durham (4 November 1850) was written too late to affect the Guy Fawkes festivities, but its publication in *The Times* on 7 November did nothing to dampen the fires. Russell's charge against the Papacy was that

> there is an assumption of power in all the documents which have come from Rome; a pretension of supremacy over the realm of England, and a claim to sole and undivided sway, which is inconsistent with the Queen's supremacy, with the rights of our bishops and clergy, and with the spiritual independence of the nation, as asserted even in Roman Catholic times.

Admitting, however, that he was indignant rather than alarmed, Russell turned to denounce the Trojan horse of Tractarianism within Anglicanism's own ranks. He instanced 'the honour paid to saints, the claim of infallibility for the Church, the superstitious use of the cross, the muttering of the liturgy so as to disguise the language in which it is written, the recommendation of auricular confession, and the administration of penance and absolution'.[26]

In response, Wiseman rushed out his *Appeal to the reason and good feeling of the English people*. Published early in December 1850, Wiseman

addressed the claim that Pius IX had challenged the royal supremacy in the English Church: 'The Royal Supremacy is no more admitted by the Scottish Kirk, by Baptists, Methodists, Quakers, Independents, Presbyterians, Unitarians, and other dissenters, than by the Catholics. None of these recognize in the Queen any authority to interfere in their religious concerns…'.[27] By the time the *Quarterly* noticed Wiseman's *Appeal* in April 1851, the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill had passed its second reading. Gladstone spoke against the Bill on 25 March:

> We cannot turn back the profound tendencies of the age towards religious liberty. It is our business to guide and control their applications. Do this you may, but to endeavour to turn them backwards is the sport of children done by the hands of men, and every effort you may make in that direction will recoil upon you with disaster and disgrace.[28]

Yet according to the *Quarterly*, 'no lesson of the past is so clear as that the unrestricted government of his clergy by the Roman See is incompatible with the free action of civil government, the freedom of the laity and even of the clergy itself'.[29]

In spite of protesting at the Vatican's new episcopal titles intended for England, the government had accepted a *fait accompli* in Ireland. The *Quarterly* cites the *Dublin Gazette* on the occasion of the Queen's visit to Ireland in August 1849. The Roman Catholic Primate and the Roman Catholic Bishop of Dublin appear in order of precedence after the Archbishop of Dublin. The *Quarterly* recalls that there had been no 'Roman Catholic Primate' at the time, as the throne of Armagh was vacant until filled by the Pope's nomination of Paul Cullen. The primate thus presumably appeared in the 1849 list 'with a view to the Court arrangements of futurity'.[30] No wonder the Ecclesiastical Titles Act caused less resentment in Ireland than among English Catholics. The Act, which became law on 1 August 1851, remained largely a dead letter. John Leach's famous *Punch* cartoon showed Russell as a schoolboy graffiti-artist under the caption: 'This is the boy who chalked up "No Popery", and then ran away.'[31] Gladstone would repeal the Act in 1871. The irony is that the Irish hierarchy, led by Cullen, would prove staunch allies of the British government, becoming almost part of the political establishment. It was the Fenians who were regarded by the Irish bishops as the destabilizing force in Ireland, committed as they were to excluding the Church from secular politics. Cullen's appointment as Archbishop of Armagh in 1850 revived a

Connellite sense of Catholic Irish identity. Cullen sought to attain his aims – disestablishment of the Anglican Church in Ireland, state endowment of a clerically controlled educational system and an extension of chaplaincy appointments in the public service – not by Irish self-government, but by creating distinctively Irish (i.e. Catholic) institutions, working through the party system at Westminster.[32]

By contrast Charles Gavan Duffy, editor of the *Nation* until 1855 when he left for Australia, sought to perpetuate Thomas Osborne Davis's non-sectarian community. But in his farewell editorial, Duffy saw 'no more hope for the Irish cause than for the corpse on the dissecting table'.[33] Alexander Martin Sullivan, Duffy's successor as editor, would later insist that Fenianism was 'strenuously reprehended by every one of the "Forty-eight" leaders with scarcely an exception'.[34] Sullivan may have been right about the leaders of '1848' – at least in the 1860s. But a decade earlier 'forty-eighters' still dominated the rhetoric and disparate ranks of non-sectarian Irish nationalists. John O'Mahony, who translated Keating's *Gaelic History of Ireland* and coined 'Fenianism', had been involved in the 1848 rising. So had James Stephens, who was with O'Brien at Ballingarry. Both Stephens and O'Mahony had fled to Paris in 1848, where they met continental revolutionaries. Stephens was impressed by the Italian exiles, who had, he found, 'in a certain way perfected conspiracy'.[35] He modelled his oath-bound society on Mazzini's Young Italy, and established his Irish Revolutionary (later Republican) Brotherhood in a Dublin wood-yard on St Patrick's Day, 1858.[36]

Meanwhile O'Mahony, now in New York, had refashioned Irish revolutionary activity under the innocuous-sounding title of the Emmet Monument Association. O'Mahony had found several 'forty-eighters' already living in New York, notably Dillon, Michael Doheny – and escapees MacManus, Meagher and Mitchel. The Irish Americans called themselves variously the Fenian Brotherhood and the Irish Revolutionary Brotherhood. Having enlisted in exclusively Irish militia regiments, the American Fenians talked of invading Ireland, and were barely dissuaded from using the new transatlantic steam-packet service for group travel to Ireland in their militia uniforms.[37] In Ireland, Stephens waited for American money – promising 10,000 men at 24 hours notice – and jealously guarded his own status as 'chief executive of the Irish revolutionary movement'. The title was given to him at his own insistence by the 18-member Irish-American revolutionary committee, led by Doheny and O'Mahony, and had accorded him 'supreme control and absolute authority' over Irish revolutionaries.[38]

In 1858 Stephens incorporated O'Donovan Rossa's Phoenix Society of Skibbereen – only to see Rossa and other leading members arrested almost immediately. Still lacking American money, Stephens went to New York himself with a letter of introduction from John Mitchel. Funds were promised, and Meagher joined most of Stephens's original backers in extending the chief executive's authority over the movement 'at home and abroad'. But news of the Phoenix Society arrests made Mitchel and Meagher draw back, leaving O'Mahony's Fenian Brotherhood to channel funds through the ambiguously named Irish Patriotic Defence Fund.[39]

Against the international background of Garibaldi's invasion of Naples, Victor Emmanuel's invasion of the Papal States and the mobilization of a 1000-strong Irish brigade to defend papal Rome, the Irish press supported calls for a 'National Petition', as a substitute for the *Nation*'s proposed Irish plebiscite on the Italian model.[40] When the petition campaign failed, the Presbyterian Thomas Neil Underwood proposed St Patrick Day banquets to be held in Cork, Belfast and Dublin to mark the launch of the National Brotherhood of St Patrick.[41] Comerford thinks the 'national petition' campaign of 1860–61 exemplifies 'the autonomous exercise of political and social skills (under the banner of nationalism) by groups of young men otherwise condemned to social and political insignificance'.[42] The same can be said of public occasions which presented opportunities for demonstrations of patriotic fervour. The first and most resonant was the reburial of the bones of MacManus, hero of 1848, who had died in America early in 1861. Archbishop Cullen correctly judged that the organizers' insistence on a public funeral was 'to proclaim their adhesion to the principle for which [MacManus] suffered, and their admiration for his conduct in taking up arms against the government in 1848'.[43] When Cullen forbade a public funeral, Fr Patrick Lavelle of County Mayo accused his metropolitan of denying MacManus the honours accorded to 'every Castle-slave, time-serving hypocrite and whigling sycophant'.[44] On the day of the burial, police reports put the procession at between 7000 and 8000, and the spectators in Abbey Street at 40,000. Stephens's estimates were four times higher.[45]

Similar expressions of nationalist sentiment were prompted by plans for an O'Connell commemorative statue, proposed by *Freeman's Journal*, and supported by the *Nation* and the *Irishman*. Sullivan served on the committee, composed largely of Dublin Liberals.[46] Dublin Corporation's 1864 decision to erect a statue of Prince Albert on a College-green site, earmarked to commemorate Grattan, was reversed

after Fenian interlopers disrupted one public meeting, and tried to gain access to a second – which the organizers had wisely made ticket-only.[47] By then the Fenian movement had been given new impetus by the first convention of the Fenian Brotherhood in Chicago (November 1863). In Ireland, Fenians – though still not adopting American nomenclature – practised military drill, which Comerford calls 'the most characteristic of all fenian activities'.[48] There was now a new excuse for wearing uniform. Between 1861 and early 1865, many American Fenians fought in the Civil War. Although Fenian hopes of hostilities between the northern states and Britain did not materialize, there was now a body of officers with battle experience ready to fight in Ireland. As the Civil War neared its end, the *Irish People* (founded in 1863 by Stephens) predicted that 'the exiles would return to the home of their affections, to raise new homesteads on the grass-covered sites of the cabins of their murdered kindred'.[49] In September 1865 Stephens set up a military council – perhaps to control the growing numbers of Irish-American officers in Dublin. But on 15 September the Castle authorities moved against Fenians throughout Ireland, raiding the offices of the *Irish People*, arresting staff and such key figures as O'Donovan Rossa, Thomas Luby and John O'Leary. (Stephens himself was not arrested for another two months.) Warships were stationed off the Irish coast to prevent an American invasion.[50]

In an eerie echo of 1798 and 1848, plans for rebellion continued in spite of government infiltration of the movement, an inadequate military arsenal and the absence of promised foreign help. On 11 February 1867, the original date for the uprising, 1000 Fenians set out to capture Chester Castle. The ambitious plan involved hijacking a train to convey munitions to Holyhead, where a ship would be commandeered to take them to Ireland. But when the Fenians entered Chester, they found British troops waiting for them. At midnight on 5 March 1867, the postponed rebellion took place at the assorted locations of Cork, Dublin, Limerick and Tipperary. Instead of opting for guerrilla warfare, as recommended by veterans of the 1848 continental revolutions,[51] Captain O'Kelly insisted on a wholesale confrontation with troops and police. The result was predictable: the government had advance notice of the rising, the rebels en route to assembly points were no match for troops and constabulary, and when an American vessel, optimistically renamed *Erin's Hope*, arrived in Sligo Bay on 20 May, with 8000 rifles and 40 American officers, they were two months too late. John Devoy could name the taking of the coastguard station of Knockadoon in Co. Cork as the only rebel success of the rising.[52] Was Fenianism ever

formidable? The question posed by William Smith O'Brien in the 1897 *Contemporary Review* has been variously answered by historians. Comerford thinks that numbers might have become significant in a European war, but that, 'divorced from the possibility of such a war, military fenianism was nothing but a charade'.[53] Newsinger challenges Comerford's view, accusing him of 'an almost perverse determination to diminish Fenianism as a revolutionary movement and instead to portray it as a social activity, as a leisure pursuit'.[54]

Contemporaries, no less than historians, found Fenianism difficult to assess. In January 1865, an article on the American Civil War prompted the *Quarterly Review* to look back to 1798: 'There is no subject upon which the Radicals of the present day have been so eloquent as on the Rebellion of 1798.' It was a movement supported by 'a large class of Irishmen, probably not by the majority, and certainly not by the mass of those who had any stake in the country'. The rebellion was suppressed 'in many cases with undue severity', but that the severity was 'generally the act of unauthorized or of obscure subordinates, whom, in the distracted conditions of the country it was difficult to control'. Yet the English language had hardly risen to the demands made upon it 'for words of vituperation to be applied to the conduct of the Irish Government in suppression of that rebellion'.[55] Two years later, the same periodical exposed the ineffectiveness of John Bright's radical rhetoric in seeking to rouse the Irish urban working class – 'the men who constitute the pith of Fenianism'. When commending his latest project for land reform, he was interrupted by shouts of 'Cheers for Stephens' and 'Cheers for the Fenian Republic'.[56]

In November 1865, *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* had printed what purported to be a reply from Count Milo McCaskey to an invitation to take command of 'the Fenian army'. Noting that the Fenian leadership had boasted that 'there is nothing religious in the present project', the count recalls the events of 1798: 'Why, don't you know that the failure of Humbert's expedition was the democratic declaration of the French that they wanted no help from the Church and would try to conquer without the Virgin Mary? From that hour Pat held back; he wasn't going to be killed here and roasted hereafter.'

The alleged letter continues in disobliging vein by predicting that the Fenians are preparing 'what the Italians call a famous "Fiasco",' and declining to be associated with 'the command of an army that does not exist, and which will only muster to be hanged or transported.'[57] And with similar irony, the writer of Cornelius O'Dowd's regular *Blackwood's* column took as his subject 'The Fenianpest'. There

were 'two plagues raging amongst us at this moment – Fenianism and the Rinderpest – with very considerable resemblance between the two'. Apart from the speed with which both contagions spread, each 'was treated by the Government with such indifference that no measures of precaution were adopted'. Fenianism (says the columnist) was nothing new: 'Irish disaffection is an old complaint, and even from '98 to the present hour has had several acute attacks "supervening", as the doctors say, "on the old affection".' Like earlier manifestations, it was 'neither more nor less than signs of that insubordinate spirit which is the Irish peasant's notion of Patriotism. Paddy knows that he is poor – that he is badly housed, ill-clothed and worse fed, and it is not a very difficult task to persuade him that somebody else is at fault for it all.'[58]

The same columnist returned to Fenianism in the summer of 1867, after the events at Chester and in Ireland. Explaining why he had previously regarded Fenianism as 'humbug', O'Dowd reminds his readers that 'Fenianism will be exactly what you like to make it'. The Fenians can be crushed by firmness, but 'if you *affect* to remove the causes of rebellion by the reform of abuses which the Fenians have not condescended to call grievances – you will make of this mock insurrection a very serious cause of trouble, and, not impossibly, an open rebellion'.[59] After the freeing of Fenian prisoners in transit, resulting in the execution of the 'Manchester martyrs', and the even greater shock of the Clerkenwell prison explosion, the *Quarterly* censured Gladstone's 'passion for self-humiliation'. This was exemplified by a recent speech:

> These painful and horrible manifestations may, perhaps, in the merciful designs of Providence – without in the slightest degree acquitting the authors of responsibility – have been intended to rouse this nation to greater search of its own heart and spirit and conscience with reference to the condition of Ireland, and the legislation affecting that country.

Such language, the *Quarterly* considered, 'rises little above the language of cant'. It was surely enough 'to attribute the cruel outrages of the Fenians to the will of wicked men, without insisting on seeing in them an especial visitation of Providence by which the innocent are tortured, mutilated and massacred in order to stir the conscience of the guilty'.[60]

In March 1868, speaking in the Commons as leader of the opposition, Gladstone complimented the Secretary for Ireland, Lord Mayo, for giving 'probably a very accurate description of the range and

prevalence of Fenianism in Ireland'. But Mayo had claimed that 'it is only the Irish in the United States of America who form the hotbed of Fenians'. Gladstone's conceded that Fenianism might be 'a plant of foreign growth', but warned that 'although it has its development in America, it has its roots in Ireland'. Parliament could not escape responsibility for fostering Fenianism.[61] Announcing his intention of bringing in three resolutions on the future of the Irish Church, Gladstone indicated, in a four-hour debate, that it was on disestablishment that the Liberal opposition diverged from the government. Gladstone might appeal to Musgrave's figures for the relative proportions of Catholic and Protestant in Ireland, but he also remarked that 'so incredibly pernicious was the system under which Ireland was governed during the last century that the Established Church could hardly be called a religious institution'.[62]

When, after further debate, Gladstone's resolutions were carried against Disraeli's ministry, the ensuing election was the first to be held on the new electoral register of the 1867 Reform Act. Disraeli campaigned on a 'no popery' ticket. On 1 March 1869, Gladstone as Prime Minister moved 'to bring in a Bill to put an end to the Established Church in Ireland, and to make provision for the temporalities thereof, and in respect of the Royal College of Maynooth'. Besides showing an incomparable grasp of his detailed proposals, Gladstone addressed the consequent amending of the Act of Union. For justification, Gladstone appealed to Pitt, who 'neither said nor believed that it would be possible under a legislative Union to maintain the system of religious inequality which he found subsisting in Ireland'. Indeed Pitt had been convinced that 'the countenance and support afforded from national sources to the Established Church must be extended to other religions of the country'. Recognizing that most of the Irish population was Catholic, Gladstone was 'ashamed to think how exceedingly small a portion of public money has fallen to their share…'.[63]

The *Quarterly Review* had immediately focused on the Act of Union. With respect to the Act's fifth article[64] and the coronation oath, the *Quarterly* found itself unable to explain what the Sovereign 'was required to promise not to do, except the very thing which it is now proposed to ask her to do'. Conceding that no parliament could bind its successor, the *Quarterly* nevertheless considers that Britain

> under monarchical forms has become so republican that it is considered intolerable if the private scruples of the Sovereign forbid any changes for which the nation is really anxious. But the Act of Union

> and the Coronation oath prove at least this, that the laws which it is proposed to alter may fairly be described as fundamental, and the change which is attempted nothing less than a revolution.[65]

What *Blackwood's* and the *Quarterly* agreed on was that disestablishment was irrelevant to the Fenian threat. In December 1867, following both the Clerkenwell explosion and (days later) Gladstone's Southport speech setting out his programme for Ireland, *Blackwood's* reviewed press reactions to disetablishment.[66] And *Blackwood's* is itself soon arguing that 'the miseries and privations of the Irish people on their own soil' are 'almost wholly the result of physical and natural causes – such as over-population, the great prevalence of bog-lands and the absence of coal and iron – which legislative action can neither prevent nor remedy'. Such political grievances as the Protestant Church Establishment 'would, if removed by legislative action, leave the real sources of Irish misery exactly where they were'.[67] The editors have no doubt who benefit from disestablishment: 'you would confer a great boon on the Irish clergy'. Maynooth College was to blame for 'every particle of the dislike that attaches to Protestantism in Ireland'. Its graduates are 'the half-educated cotter, the peasant in black gaiters'. The social inferiority of the 'cleverest schoolmaster of disaffection' is proof that to have 'trained up such a race of men is one of the most fatuous follies of all our rule in Ireland'.[68]

The *Quarterly* sees disestablishment as 'chiefly a dexterous advantage taken of the panic excited by such Fenian outrages as the attempt on Chester Castle, the Manchester rescue, the Clerkenwell explosion'. Government reaction is like 'atrocities committed by panic-stricken multitudes, under the impression that the plague has been artificially introduced or propagated amongst them'. Nothing could be more certain than that the Irish Established Church 'is perfectly innocent of the origins of the growth of Fenianism.' The Fenian leaders have 'laid bare with perfect candour their motives and their aims'.[69] And in November 1869 *Blackwood's* columnist, Cornelius O'Dowd, neatly observes: 'If the Fenians did not explode a prison, they blew up a Church.' O'Dowd facetiously suggests that the Fenians should be at Whitehall rather than in Portland Prison. They wanted 'to do in *their* way, what Mr Gladstone wanted to do in *his* – there is the whole difference! They knew nothing of bills in Parliament, but had an unlimited confidence in gunpowder'.[70]

The continued detention of 32 Fenian prisoners gave new impetus to the Amnesty Movement, started in 1868. In 1870 Isaac Butt asked in

Ireland's Appeal for Amnesty whether Ireland was in the United Kingdom as an equal partner or as a subject nation held by force of arms.[71] In May of the same year, Butt carried his Home Rule resolution (at the Bilton Hotel, Dublin) 'that the true remedy for the evils of Ireland is the establishment of an Irish parliament with full control over domestic affairs'.[72] Butt had earlier attended the Land Conference held in Dublin in February, where he secured the drawing up of *maximum* demands.[73] Gladstone's limited 1870 Land Bill was more important as a precedent for future government intervention than for its immediate impact – though it did make eviction for reasons other than non-payment of rent more costly for the landlord.[74] The *Tablet* quoted Lord Dufferin's statement that 'to expect a Tenant's compensation bill to quell Fenianism would be as reasonable as to try to stifle a conflagration on the first floor by stuffing a blanket down the kitchen chimney'.[75] Only a few days earlier, the Vatican issued the formal condemnation of the Fenians that the Irish hierarchy had been lobbying for in Rome.[76]

The French declaration of war against the Prussia of Bismarck's *Kulturkampf* was supported by the Catholic community, while Cullen's endorsement of France would earn him the *Legion d' honneur*. On 18 July, the day before France declared war, the dogma of papal infallibility was promulgated by the Vatican Council, which had been sitting since early the previous December. The doctrine had been a political issue in the 1790s, and figured prominently in the Musgrave-Plowden debate. This fresh assertion of papal claims did not provoke the popular excitement that had marked controversies over the Maynooth grant or the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill, but it incensed Gladstone. 'The whole proceeding has been monstrous,' he announced to Clarendon, 'and it will hereafter become one of the laughing stocks of history.' And he told Bishop Moriarty: 'The proclamation of Infallibilty I must own I look upon as the most portentous (taking them singly) of all events in the history of the Christian Church.'[77] When in May 1870 Gladstone moved the repeal of the Ecclesiastical Titles Act, he declared that he would have kept it, if it could still be used against 'the extravagant pretensions put forward by the Court of Rome'.[78] After the 1874 election returned Disraeli's Conservatives to power, Gladstone would write pamphlets that revived the vehemence of pre-Emancipation invective against the Roman Catholic Church.[79]

11
Jubilees, Centenaries and Historians

The Fenians had attempted to detach the debate about Irish independence from the polemical confrontation between Catholic and Protestant. The defeat of Gladstone's Irish University Bill of 1873, through opposition from the Catholic hierarchy, brought down the Liberal government. The Bill proposed the abolition of Queen's College, Galway, and the creation of an Irish National University, incorporating both Trinity College and the Catholic University of Dublin – but excluding theology, philosophy and modern history from the curriculum.[1] Newman's *Idea of a university* (1875) held that to exclude theology from university courses was 'to impair the completeness and invalidate the trustworthiness of all that is actually taught in them'; but he was defending Catholic not Reformation theology.[2] The 1870s saw Protestant resentment at Disestablishment redoubled by the promulgation of the dogma of Papal Infallibility. The resentment was dramatically fuelled by Gladstone's intemperate intervention.

In 1874 Gladstone, now out of office and perhaps not expecting to return, published his *Vatican decrees and their bearing on civil allegiance*.[3] In language that echoed the more extreme representatives of the Establishment press from half-a-century before, the former prime minister declared: 'The Rome of the Middle Ages claimed universal monarchy. The modern Church of Rome has abandoned nothing, retracted nothing.' And, repeating words he had used in the *Contemporary Review* for the previous October, he argued that Rome had now gone further by substituting, 'for the proud boast of *semper eadem*, a policy of violence and change in faith', and had 'refurbished and paraded anew every rusty tool she was fondly thought to have disused'. The Roman Church had 'equally repudiated modern thought and ancient history'. Admitting the 'seeming roughness' of some of these earlier expressions,

Gladstone denies any intention of retracting them.[4] Taking the slogan 'a Catholic first, and Englishman afterwards', he suggests that Catholics intend, 'in case of any conflict between the Queen and the Pope, to follow the Pope, and let the Queen shift for herself as she is well able to do'.[5] Understandably, Newman regretted that Gladstone had 'felt it his duty to speak with such extraordinary severity of our Religion and of ourselves'. He finds Gladstone's account 'neither trustworthy nor charitable', though he acknowledges that Catholics may be thought blameworthy in their manner of proceeding. Although Newman regrets the manner of promulgation, he does not deny the Vatican's claims: 'I uphold them as heartily as I recognize my duty of loyalty to the constitution, the laws and the government of England. I see no inconsistency in my being at once a good Catholic and a good Englishman.'[6]

Newman was too fair-minded an antagonist to win unqualified approval from Vatican insiders. Remarking that Newman 'though eminent for the purity of his Catholic sentiments, is yet in no manner in the counsels of Rome', the *Quarterly* concludes: 'The meaning put by Dr Newman on the Papal Acts is one plainly not endorsed by the Pope; and that fact carries with it a signal justification of the warning note raised by Mr Gladstone'.[7] The *Edinburgh Review* introduced its own notice of seven titles, in what it called this 'windy war of words', with a predictably forthright statement: 'It must be confessed that the Church of Rome is at this moment not only opposed to the autonomy of Italy and Germany, but that she is at war with modern society in all its interests, spiritual as well as temporal.'[8] The editors pay tribute not only to Gladstone's *Vatican Decrees* (1874), but to its sequel, *Vaticanism* (1875) which they describe as 'by far the abler production of the two, both in style and substance'. The *Edinburgh* gives credit to Disraeli's novel *Lothair* (1870) for its prophetic warnings about Vatican politics, but disagrees with Gladstone's chief argument. He knows (says the *Edinburgh*) 'that English Roman Catholics are quite as loyal now as they were in the days of Lord Howard of Effingham and the Spanish Armada'. It does not think 'that the position of Catholic subjects has been altered by the Vatican Council, to the extent which Mr Gladstone supposes, or indeed to any extent that is historically appreciable'.[9] The reviewer thinks that 'the political-allegiance aspect of the Infallibility question does not deserve the zeal which Mr Gladstone shows about it, and the polemical bitterness which he has tried to excite'.[10] The *Expostulation* sold 150,000 copies in its first year, but Gladstone's biographers point out the damage done to his Irish policy. The Pope

called him 'a viper attacking the bark of St Peter', while Cardinal Cullen ordered prayers to be said in all Irish churches for Gladstone to be brought to see his error.[11]

The year that saw the publication of Gladstone's first Vatican pamphlet, also saw the appearance of the last volume of Froude's *English in Ireland*. The introduction to the three-volume work had reflected Fenian activity in Froude's allusion to 'a nation which at once will not defend its liberties in the field, nor yet allow itself to be governed, but struggles to preserve the independence which it wants the spirit to uphold in arms, by insubordination and anarchy and secret crime'.[12] The first volume, reflecting on the impact of American independence, remarked that 'to the Volunteers the disaster at Yorktown had been an Irish victory', and referred dismissively to 'Americanized Presbyterians'.[13] An equally dismissive account of the events of 1782, reflects Froude's opposition to the Home Rule arguments of his own day:

> For a month every Irish heart had beat high with hope. On the 16th April Mr Grattan was to move a Declaration of Rights, which recalled the American Declaration of Independence; and the House of Commons, schooled by the Volunteers, and itself in a brief dream of patriotic intoxication, was by its vote to tell England and the world that Ireland's thraldom had ended.[14]

The third volume opens by ridiculing the revived Volunteers and United Irishmen of the early 1790s. They talked about government by consent, but 'they might as well have said that their consent was required to laws which would break their necks if they fell over a precipice'. The functions of government, Froude explains, are entrusted 'not to those persons only who have given proof of energy and ability, but to those who by birth and station are raised above the temptations of self-interest'. Democracies were proverbially short-lived: 'They can destroy class privileges, they can overthrow institutions, but their function ends in destruction'. The men of the American and French revolutions 'were greater than any which either country has produced in the days of universal suffrage, equality and miscalled liberty'.[15]

Among the principal actors of the later 1790s, Froude defends Camden [iii pp. 262, 285–6] and Lake [iii pp. 270–4, 382–5], but censures Cornwallis [iii p. 300], Moira [iii pp. 315–17] and Abercromby [iii pp. 352–6]. Abercromby's resignation was more calculated 'to shake his Majesty's interests in Ireland than any other event could have produced'; Cornwallis's 'solid qualities were unequal to the understanding

of the Irish problem'; and Froude asks 'by what irony of fate have the speeches of Lord Moira been allowed to govern the opinion of later generations of Englishmen?'[16] Froude denies that the Rebellion was provoked by military oppression. Noting that Catholic attempts to extenuate the massacre at Scullabogue display 'the same inadequate penitence with which they at once deny and excuse the massacre of 1641', Froude instructs his readers: 'The burglar who kills a policeman, is none the less guilty of murder because the policeman began the quarrel by placing his hand on his shoulder.'[17]

The *Edinburgh Review* thought it 'a happy coincidence' that Froude's history had appeared 'at a time when all the elements of moderation and stability in Irish politics have been swept away before the absurd resuscitation of Repeal'; and when the demand for Home Rule 'would give to the disaffected classes an absolute power of legislation and administration in their island'. Ireland ought to recognize that 'she can no more free herself from the influence of England than the moon can abandon the earth to set up an independent planet'. An Irish parliament would reflect 'every passion, every prejudice and every delusion of the disaffected classes', while, 'judging by the pertinacity with which both Protestants and Catholics still cling to the observance of disquieting anniversaries, the mutual animosities of Irishmen would become more deadly and destructive than ever'. The *Edinburgh* concedes that 'on the score of historic impartiality, Froude's account of the insurrection of 1798 is the least satisfactory portion of his work'. He has, however, 'certainly assisted in dispelling whole clouds of misrepresentation raised by Irish national writers'.[18]

Froude's anti-Catholic bias is revealed throughout his account of the rebellion: 'No sincere Irish Catholic could ever, as Lord Clare said, be voluntarily loyal to a Protestant sovereign; but he would understand the duty of submission, and the duty of enforcing submission upon his countrymen, when he was made to see without disguise or circumlocution the nature of the alternatives'. Froude observes that 'in the Yeomanry, the Castle possessed a force unassailable by the arts of the priests'.[19] And he thinks Camden should have 'frankly adopted the Orange boys' as the most reliable of all the subjects of the Crown. Instead Camden 'stopped short of the massacre which would have given him the absolute command of the insurrection'.[20] The *Edinburgh* admits that 'the yeomanry exercised the most cruel and wanton severities in their efforts to stamp out the last embers of insurrection', but finds extenuation in their having acted 'with all the energy and ferocity of fear' provoked by the shock of the French invasion.[21]

The *Quarterly Review,* like the *Edinburgh*, recognized the defects of Froude's history: 'He indulges too frequently in flashes of savage scorn, and the dignity of history is somewhat impaired by the lively rage of the historian, shaking a whip at the scoundrels he denounces'. Moreover 'in some instances, he may have relied too implicitly on official evidence derived from the Secret Papers of the Government'[22]: yet the reviewer quotes with approval Froude's criticism of Liberal policy.[23] The *Quarterly* has no doubt that 'the movement of the United Irishmen was in its origin a Jacobin movement, but the Jacobinism was only the froth on the surface'. Its first supporters, the Protestants of Ulster, 'soon fell off', and the 'strength and vitality of the movement lay in the disaffection of the Catholic population'. Although the *Quarterly*'s reviewer gives a balanced summary of the relations between Catholics and Presbyterians within the United Irish movement, he accepts Froude's Musgravian analysis:

> There can be no doubt that a large part of the Catholic priesthood were working to the hands, if not in the secrets, of the United Irishmen, and that after the summer of 1797 the conspiracy passed rapidly into the form which, as Mr Froude says, rebellions in that country rapidly assume, and became a strictly nationalist movement of the Catholic Irish.[24]

That such anti-Catholic sentiments would still find a ready reading public, is shown by the publication in 1879 of an illustrated edition of Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*.[25]

When in 1892, a new Regius Professor of History was needed at Oxford, it was Lecky (Cheltenham College and Trinity College, Dublin) rather than Froude (Westminster School and Oriel College, Oxford) who was first offered the post. When Lecky declined the offer, the appointment went to Froude, who held it until his death two years later. Lecky's *History of England in the eighteenth century* was published in eight volumes between 1878 and 1890, but appeared in 1892 in a new edition of 12 volumes, of which five are devoted to Ireland. Reviewing the last two volumes of the first edition, the *Quarterly* recalled that the Irish-born Lecky had promised a concluding volume devoted to 'a history of the closing years of the Irish Parliament, of the great rebellion which it encountered, and of the Act of Union by which it was finally destroyed'. He had been 'better than his word' in spreading the story over two volumes, containing 'the fullest and most accurate, and the most exhaustive account that has hitherto been laid

before the world, of any period of Irish history'.[26] Lecky's analysis recognizes the role of the Irish Presbyterians of the 1790s:

> The republican religion of the northern Presbyterians gave them some bias towards republican government, and their sympathy with the New England Puritans in their contest against England had been passionate and avowed. They had scarcely any part among the landed gentry of Ireland, and were therefore less sensible than other Protestants of the necessity of connection with England for the security of their property, while they were more keenly sensible than any other class to the evils of the existing system of government.[27]

Lecky notes that the United Irishmen's strategy changed when it 'begins to look easier to obtain a republic than a reform under existing government'. They 'began to argue, as Adams and his colleagues had argued in the beginning of the American troubles, that the French would only assist them in a struggle for independence. The reform of the Irish Parliament could be no object to France'.[28] Lecky is satisfied that in 1794 the Defenders were not yet linked to the United Irishmen. The Defenders' campaign 'aimed chiefly at Whiteboy objects, but a political element was beginning very perceptibly to mingle with it'.[29]

Contrasting Lecky's *History* with Froude's, the *Quarterly Review* praises the Irishman's 'full and accurate knowledge, joined to his scrupulous avoidance of anything savouring of extravagance of style'. But the reviewer finds Lecky's approach *too* measured, and considers he has 'marred the artistic effect' of his work, by 'his habit of telling his story between inverted commas'.[30] Lecky's account of what the reviewer calls 'the progress of sedition, of the gradual deepening of sectarian distrust and the growth of religious animosities' has the defect of lacking 'any attractive human figure to give animation to the story'. The only personality 'of real imagination' is Tone – described in the review as 'the first of the Fenians, not in name of course, but in spirit and sentiment'.[31] The *Quarterly* defends the pre-emptive action of the 1797 Castle administration in 'stifling in detail a pre-arranged national revolt; which, had it taken place simultaneously on the scale contemplated by those who planned it, must infallibly have wrecked the whole constitutional system, and have ended in the establishment of an independent Ireland, sustained and rendered formidable by French power'. And the *Quarterly*'s application of the 1790s experience to the topical question of Home Rule (which Lecky, like Froude opposed) is

shown by devoting more than half its 32-page review to the weakness of the Grattan Parliament and the story of the Union.[32]

The *Edinburgh Review* was equally anxious to point a topical moral, admitting that it had been 'led somewhat astray from Mr Lecky's valuable book by the light it casts on contemporary politics.' A comparison of 'the state of Ireland in the last ten years of the eighteenth century, when she had what was called a national Parliament, with her present condition, is in our judgment to answer the question of the utility of the Union'.[33] Yet the Ireland of Lecky's *History*, where 'men like Tone and his followers were not only rebels to the law, but traitors to the empire', differs from Ireland of the 1890s which 'has unquestionably none of the causes of irritation and complaint' of the 1790s. There is another contrast:

> The body of United Irishmen had been founded and led by men of rank, property and influence. At the present time, we may say with confidence that the majority of the landowners, the learned professions, the mercantile classes, and the Protestants are staunch supporters of the Union. The Vatican itself has condemned the proceedings of the Nationalists, as contrary to public morality.

The agitation of 1890 resembles the rising of 1798 in one respect: 'it relies mainly on foreign support'. But instead of a French invasion, 'we have to deal with American organization and American subsidies'. The *Edinburgh* nevertheless decides: 'There is no genuine hostility to the Union now existing in Ireland. It has done its work by rallying to the empire all that is most intelligent and respected in the island'.[34]

It was this imperial perspective that the *Edinburgh Review* found lacking in Lecky.Events which occurred outside Ireland in the years 1793–1800 'at home, on the Continent, in India and in Egypt, in which England bore so great a part, are wholly unnoticed'. One of the ironies of the 1890s is that John Morley, whom Gladstone detached from working on Chamberlain's Local Government Bill so as to draft the first Home Rule Bill, played a key role in reviving respect for Burkean ideals that meshed so much better with imperial ideas than with Home Rule arguments. Morley's life of Burke (1879) appeared in a new edition in 1888 – with reprintings in 1892, 1897 and 1902. Morley held that the combined effect of historical method, and 'certain dominant conceptions' in natural science, was 'bringing men round to a way of looking at society for which Burke's maxims are exactly suited; and it seems probable that he will be more frequently and more

seriously referred to within the next twenty years than he has been within the whole of the last eighty'.[35] It was Morley who famously remarked: 'I am very glad when Lord Salisbury makes a great speech. It is sure to contain one blazing indiscretion which it is a delight to remember'.[36] Salisbury returned the compliment, remarking that Morley (when briefly Chief Secretary of Ireland in 1886) was 'a very distinguished literary man, but he held no other title to fame'.[37]

As early as 1872, Salisbury had written in the *Quarterly Review* that Ireland must be kept 'like India at all hazards: by persuasion if possible; if not by force'.[38] In 1886, during the excitement over the first Home Rule Bill, Salisbury told a public meeting at Her Majesty's Theatre in the Haymarket that 'we are suddenly confronted by a great danger to the Empire', and that 'there is no middle term between government at Westminster and independent and separate government at Dublin'.[39] And in an address to 600 delegates of the National Union of Conservative and Constitutional Associations in May 1886, he answered those who urged them to have confidence in the Irish people: 'Confidence depends upon the people in whom you are to confide. You would not confide representative institutions to the Hottentots for instance. Nor, going higher up the scale, would you confide them to the Oriental nations whom you are governing in India'. Self-government worked well among 'people who are of Teutonic race, but it does not work so well when people of other races are called upon to join in it'.[40] The implication for the Celtic Irish was unambiguous.

Salisbury was Prime Minister during both the royal jubilees and the centenary of 1798, and throughout the South African War. Andrew Roberts, in his life of Salisbury, calls the Diamond Jubilee of 1897 the 'apogee of Empire'.[41] The Queen's Golden Jubilee had not matched the later celebrations. The years 1883–85 had seen Fenian dynamite bombs explode in Whitehall, the Tower of London and the Palace of Westminster; the government had also received warning of a Jubilee explosion. Yet in 1887 the Queen had driven from Buckingham Palace to Westminster Abbey in a procession containing an international galaxy of princes and diplomatic representatives; bonfires were lit on headlands from Land's End to Shetland; there were royal reviews of the army at Aldershot and of the navy at Spithead; and there was the first Colonial Conference of prime ministers from the self-governing colonies.[42] The Diamond Jubilee supplement produced by the *Illustrated London News* in June 1897 has a distinctly more imperialistic flavour. It announces itself as providing 'a comprehensive survey of the veritable army of troops and the illustrious throng of royal personages,

Colonial dignitaries and officers of State, whose presence will make the Queen's triumphal progress through London one of the most famous state pageants of the world's history'.[43] Subsequent issues carried pictures of the Jubilee procession itself (26 June), 'the Diamond Jubilee Illuminations in India' (24 July), and an account of the naval review (3 July). This last report recalled that 'since Henry VIII reviewed the fleet of Lord Lisle in 1545' there had been 'many a grand pageant at Spithead'. But no fleet 'heretofore assembled in any waters has been so powerful or composed in so large a proportion of the newest and latest types of vessels'. This showed 'the nation's complete awakening to the real value of sea power and of all it entails to an empire such as ours'. The fleet also provided 'evidence to the assembled Empire that the mother-country has recognised her responsibilities, and has not been unfaithful in her trust'.[44]

That was not how Irish nationalists saw it. In 1896, as the Diamond Jubilee approached, the newly revived *Nation* reported that English newspapers carried 'effusive notices' of Her Majesty entering upon the sixtieth year of her reign. The *Nation* finds it 'an event relative to which no enthusiasm is visible in Ireland'. So far as Ireland was concerned:

> The reign of Queen Victoria has been as fatal to her children as that of Elizabeth, as destructive of her native trade and commerce as was that of William or of Anne, as much characterised by the rejection of her constitutional claims as was that of George III. The Victorian era is destined to live in the memory of our people, immortalized by the sombre records which tell of two famines and the loss of well nigh five millions of our race.

In consequence, 'Ireland stands today before the nations of Christendom bereft of her liberties, which were torn from her, and wearing the manacles which were clasped upon her limbs when a felonious Act of Union was sealed by the blood of her sons shed by the bayonets of the Hessians and the Yeomen'.[45] Understandably, the *Irish Times* decided that this was still the old *Nation* of 1842: 'After half-a-century of varied effort and unsuccess, of occasional misfortune, and often bitter, and sometimes vicious struggle, the language of THE NATION is still akin to that which proved so long feeble and vain.'[46] As for jubilees, the *Nation* preferred to mark the 50th anniversary of the Repeal of the Corn Laws with 'A Century of Brigandage in Ireland', which focused on English taxation of Ireland, and recalled Dr Johnson's pre-Union warning: 'Do not join

with us or we shall rob you.'[47] Throughout the autumn of 1896, the *Nation* was filled with metropolitan and provincial press comment on the Dillonite National Convention in Dublin.[48] In January 1897 the *Nation* reports the Queen's Speech at the opening of Parliament. As printed in the *Nation*, four-and-a-half lines are devoted to Ireland, five to the West Indies, seven to Matabeleland and Mashonaland, nine to Egypt, and 24 to India where the autumn rains had failed.[49]

Two weeks earlier, the *Belfast Newsletter* had opened the year by announcing a public subscription to mark the Diamond Jubilee. The *Newsletter* reports the public meeting convened by the Lord Mayor of Belfast, recording the following resolution:

> That in recognition of the vast strides of commerce, science, literature, and art during the Victorian era, we the citizens of Belfast, resolve that a statue of her Majesty Queen Victoria be erected in Belfast, as the most suitable form of commemorating the loyal devotion of our most beloved Queen to the nation's welfare during a reign extending over a longer period than that of any other British sovereign.

The opening subscriptions had reached £22,275; by the end of April they had passed £30,000, including many £1 donations.[50] Meanwhile the *Nation* reported subscriptions to the People's Rights Fund, and support for establishing a daily newspaper in Dublin 'to represent views so eloquently expressed' in the weekly *Nation*'s correspondence columns. Carrying in January a correspondent's call for a memorial to mark the centenary of Tone's death, in May the *Nation* canvassed appropriate celebrations for the fiftieth anniversary of O'Connell's death. Reporting that 'arrangements are being made in Rome and Genoa to celebrate this anniversary with special solemnity', the *Nation* notes that the Pope has expressed the wish 'that similar celebrations be held in Ireland'. It welcomes this reminder of 'the example of a great leader who knew so well how to unite the love of faith with the love of fatherland'.[51]

In mid-February the *Belfast Newsletter* ran a report headed 'The Rebellion of 1798/Magnificent Commemoration in London'. A speaker informed a gathering in St James's Hall that, a few days before, he had 'told the British Parliament to its teeth that they reserved to themselves the right on a fit occasion to use force to win back their liberties, as force had been used to take their liberties from them'. J. F. X. O'Brien then moved:

> That we hail with the greatest satisfaction the growth of a movement throughout the countries inhabited by our scattered Celtic

> race, which has for its object during this year to worthily honour and reverence the names and memories of Wolfe Tone and his fellow United Irishmen, and of all who helped by service and sacrifice to win back the freedom of our fatherland a century ago.

John Dillon moved a second resolution calling on Irishmen 'at home and abroad' to commemorate the '98 centenary 'free from all party and sectional feelings'. A further resolution, seconded by O'Connell's grand-daughter, appealed 'to our race to cherish their memories and aspirations as an incentive to the ultimate achievement of a free and independent nation'.[52] The *Nation* had earlier reported a preliminary meeting of the Liverpool Centennial Association, where the chairman hoped that the centennial year 'may break not upon the fragments of a despairing people, but upon a nation of united Irishmen'.[53]

It was not expectations of unity that led the *Belfast Newsletter* to report a change of route for the centenary procession planned for 6 June, and to announce: 'In view of the possible disturbances in connection with the '98 demonstration at Hannahstown on Monday next, the authorities have decided to augment the local force by 3000 extra police, drawn from the counties of Tyrone and Cavan'.[54] On the morning of 6 June, after an uneventful night and by the appointment of six 'military magistrates', the *Newsletter* expected that 'the demonstration should pass off very quietly'.[55] The procession itself was free of incident: 'It was about the poorest thing in the way of demonstrations that had ever been witnessed in our city. Left to itself, it could only have brought ridicule on those who took part in it. The demonstrators went home bedraggled, and no doubt downhearted'. But riots in Shankill Road that night gave the nationalists a propaganda victory: while 'the avowed sympathisers with disloyalty and rebellion, seemed to keep the law, the Loyalists have broken out into wild excesses, and thereby cast shame on Belfast loyalty'. Nationalists would doubtless 'throw it in the teeth of every Irish Unionist, on every possible occasion'.[56] The pretext had been a blank pistol shot supposedly fired during the procession, but in the ensuing riot 'there is hardly a policemen in the force who has escaped injury'. The following day the *Newsletter* reported, 'with feelings of shame and indignation', another night of rioting: 'Bands of rioters, who we suppose would call themselves Loyalists and Protestants, turned out and roamed the streets, stoning the police and committing wicked and wilful damage to property'. This time, however, there had been retaliatory Catholic provocation in the shape of a 'carefully planned and premeditated attack made

upon the Islandmen as they were returning home from work shortly before six o'clock'.[57] It would be another three days before the city could be pronounced quiet.[58]

In Dublin, *Freeman's Journal* prepared for the June celebrations by running a prize competition for articles to be published in a 'Special '98 Number' of the *Weekly Freeman* on 18 June. A prize of ten guineas was offered for the best 'historical sketch' of '98, with five-guinea prizes for such topics as: a short life of Tone, Emmet or Fitzgerald, a song or ballad 'founded on an event or incident' of '98, and an outline of 'British Policy and Methods in Provoking the Insurrection'.[59] The winning article on the last-named topic, by G. M. Kirby, was published on 18 June, and began: 'Corruption followed by coercion, military despotism and execution, such in turn were the measures pursued by the so-called "Irish" Government at the bidding of the British Ministry during the years prior to the outbreak of the insurrection.' Other winning entries in the same issue included James Collins's article on informers, and 'The orators of the Irish Parliament' by Thomas E. Mayne of Belfast. There were numerous illustrations, including an engraving of Henry Allan's recently exhibited *Martial Law in '98*.[60] In the following issue of the *Weekly Freeman* appeared a drawing of Tone's grave, and an article on James Napper Tandy in a series entitled 'The Men of '98. Their motives and measures'.[61]

Irishmen commemorating 1798 were as divided in their interpretations of the Rebellion as historians have been. In mid-May 1897, a Wexford correspondent ('P. F. K.'), writing in the *Nation* on 'the forthcoming '98 celebrations, in which almost all Irishmen are interested', objected to those who 'would deprive the centenary of its religious character'. He admits that some of the leaders were not Catholics, 'but the rank and file were almost to a man of the ancient faith', while 'the Orangemen and the Unionists of the day were on the side of the foreign government'.[62] Two weeks later, a rival correspondent remarked that P. F. K. 'has much to learn about the nature and objects of the United Irishmen of that period', whose society was 'essentially an anti-clerical movement condemned by all the Catholic bishops of the day'. The 'local insurrection' of Wexford was 'led and very ably led for a while by certain priests'; but 'no priest save in and about Wexford took part in it'. And he cites Plowden as evidence that all priests save one in the Wexford rebellion were 'under episcopal censure for their manner of life'. The letter continues:

> The society of United Irishmen had its origins not in Catholic Ireland, but in Belfast and among the Presbyterians of Ulster. It was,

> in fact, a wave of the French Revolutionary spirit which struck Ireland. It would have had no importance – probably no existence – but for the aid and sympathy of the French Revolutionary leaders who had deposed Christianity and set up the worship of an abstract, which they called the *Etre Supreme*.

It was in effect a Jacobin rebellion, not a Catholic one.[63]

The same debate received more considered attention in the *Quarterly Review* of January 1898, in a review of six books headed by a new edition of Maxwell's *History of the Irish Rebellion in 1798* (1845).[64] Marvelling at 'the pathetic delight with which the Irish people love to indulge in their dreary recollections of their abortive past', and at their persistence in allowing 'neither the balm of time nor the oblivion of the grave to work their merciful alleviations', the *Quarterly* decides that 'the cult of the Rebellion which began among the Young Irelanders is just as strong today as it was fifty years ago'.[65] In his historiographical survey of 1798, the reviewer considers that concentration on the Rebellion by Froude and Lecky, has deterred 'others from venturing into the same field'. Maxwell's volume, published more than half-a-century before, is 'largely a *rechauffé* of the writings of Musgrave, Hay, Barrington and others of the earlier historians'. Gordon's history was 'eulogized by Mr Lecky as presenting the most truthful, the most moderate and most humane account of the rebellion and of its cause'. But the *Quarterly* does not see why such praise should detract from Sir Richard Musgrave, 'the most painstaking and most fully informed' of the early historians.[66]

The *Quarterly* regrets that Alexander Knox did not undertake the writing of a definitive history. Author of *Essays on the political circumstances of Ireland* (1795) – and of the secret report of the Irish House of Commons (1798) – Knox lent support to the view that the 1798 Rebellion was 'not, as in English popular imagination it has long appeared, a sort of eighteenth-century Gunpowder Treason'.[67] The reviewer quotes from Knox's preface to the collected edition of his essays;

> The attentive reader will find sufficient proof that the primary object of the United Irishmen was strictly and exclusively Revolutionary Democracy; and that though, from the first moment of their institution, they regarded the religious disaffection of the Irish Catholics as the chief instrument of their design, and the surest pledge of their success, it was uniformly their object to make Religion subservient to Jacobinism, and not Jacobinism to Religion.

Henry Parnell's similar judgement in his *History of the Penal Laws* (1808) is also endorsed.[68] The *Quarterly*, sceptical of claims that United Irishmen were originally reformers driven to violence by government policy, again quotes Knox: 'No fact can be more established than that the Society of United Irishmen, from the first moment of the institution, has been, with respect to its leading members, a band of systematic traitors'.[69] The *Quarterly* notes that the descendants of the United Irishmen of Dublin and the south now support the Union, while 'the descendants of the Celtic and Catholic elements in the Irish Union remain inveterately opposed to that connexion'. The difference can only be explained by 'a racial antagonism to which Great Britain is no more likely to surrender today than she has been at any period during the seven centuries through which, to the disadvantage of both kingdoms, it has unhappily prevailed'.[70]

In the centenary year of the Union, Britain was engaged in its most imperialistic of wars. Even an Irish historian was impressed to find that when the South African War broke out, 'the sons of the empire' stood forth. 'And from every quarter of the world where the English flag waved, brave and stalwart men hurried to the point of danger'. But although Irish regiments loyally served against the Boers, in Ireland 'the whole feeling of the mass of the people has been vehemently against England, and in favour of the Dutch republics'.[71] Perhaps it was a recognition of this hostility at the heart of the Empire that took Queen Victoria to southern Ireland in April 1900, at the height of the South African War, and nine months before she died.[72]

The year of the Queen's last Irish visit saw publication of the highly polemical *Critical examination of Irish History* by T. Dunbar Ingram. Deploring the English penchant for 'self-depreciation and self-condemnation', the author embarks on his own historiographical survey. Thus John Curry, in his *Historical and critical review of the civil wars in Ireland* (1775), had 'set himself to transform Irish history into a catalogue of English misdeeds'. Plowden was 'a mercenary scribbler' who wrote his *Survey* (1803) ostensibly in defence of the Union, and 'when he was disappointed in the wages he expected, wrote his *History* [1811] to show that Union was a misfortune to Ireland'. Lecky 'enlisted in the ranks of the detractors of English and British Government', but was 'the most respectable among the teachers of the doctrine that no good thing can come out of the

British Nazareth'.[73] As he turns to his own version of 1798, Ingram points to Tone's summary of the aims of the *Northern Star*:

> To give a fair statement of all that passed in France, whither every one turned their eyes; to inculcate the necessity of union among Irishmen of all religious persuasions; to support the emancipation of the Catholics; and finally, as the necessary though not avowed consequence of all this, to erect Ireland into a republic independent of England.

Oliver Bond's statement that 'Catholic Emancipation was mere pretence' is also cited. Ingram questions the need for secrecy in the proceedings of Drennan's proposed brotherhood, at a time when 'the war had not commenced, and there was no Conventicle Act, no Insurrection or Treasonable Correspondence Act'.[74]

Ingram sees such evidence as refuting Lecky's statement that 'the Society of United Irishmen was at first constituted for the simple purpose of forming a political union of Protestants and Catholics, and thus obtaining a liberal measure of parliamentary reform'.[75] The United Irishmen, though professing themselves the friends of the people, 'never suggested a measure for increasing their happiness, relieving their distress, or promoting their improvement'. The United Irishmen 'had nothing to offer them but barren declamation and political speculation'. These 'murderous mountebanks' combined 'about 1795 or earlier' with a body of 'Roman Catholic banditti who called themselves Defenders, and became indistinguishable from them'.[76] In truth, Irish Catholics as a body 'never have been loyal to the Protestant King of Great Britain, and never will be until the religious fervour which prevails among them has cooled down to what it is in France and Germany'.[77] As in the *Quarterly*, Alexander Knox's condemnation of the United Irishmen is given prominence: 'Like the first deceiver of man, you have stolen into the retreats of innocence and tranquillity, and changed them by your persistent suggestions into scenes of turbulence and guilt.'[78]

We do not need to notice Ingram's footnote references to recognize Musgrave's influence; nor the resort to a 1794 pamphlet by Camille Desmoulins to support Musgrave's claim that Rabaut St Etienne was in Ireland in 1792.[79] Whatever the conclusions of modern scholarship, Sir Richard Musgrave's *History of the Different Rebellions in Ireland* casts a long shadow over all those who 'speak of '98'.

Notes

List of abbreviations used in the Notes

Sources are listed in the chapter notes that follow. Unless otherwise indicated full bibliographical details are given at the first mention of the title. The place of publication is London if not otherwise stated. References in subsequent chapters are abbreviated but with a pointer to the initial reference *viz*. [1.22] Major sources are indicated by the following abbreviations.

AJR	*Antijacobin Review and Magazine*
AJW	*Anti-Jacobin, or Weekly Examiner*
BC	*British Critic*
BEM	*Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*
BNL	*Belfast Newsletter*
CR	*Critical Review*
CUL	Cambridge University Library
ER	*Edinburgh Review*
FJ	*Freeman's Journal*
HJ	*Hibernian Journal*
IHS	*Irish Historical Studies*
MR	*Monthly Review*
MM	*Monthly Magazine*
NS	*Northern Star*
NLI	National Library of Ireland
PR	*Weekly Political Register*
PRONI	Public Record Office Northern Ireland
QUB	Queen's University, Belfast
TCD	Trinity College, Dublin
TRHS	*Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*
WF	*Weekly Freeman*
WN	*Weekly Nation*
WMQ	*William and Mary College Quarterly*

1 1798: Bicentennial Verdict

1. Cornwallis to Portland 28 June 1798 in K. Whelan, *The Tree of Liberty: radicalism, Catholicism and the construction of Irish identity, 1760–1830* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1996) p. 148.
2. For the English context of *AJR* and its antijacobin campaign *see* S. Andrews, *Unitarian Radicalism: political rhetoric 1770–1814* (Palgrave, 2003) Chapters 14 and 15, and *The British periodical press and the French revolution, 1789–99* (Palgrave, 2000).
3. *See* next chapter.

4. D. Dickson, in R. Musgrave, *Memoirs of the different rebellions in Ireland from the arrival of the English and a particular detail of that which broke out on the XXIIID of May MDCCXCVIII, with the history of the conspiracy which preceded it, and the characters of the principal actors in it* 4th edn [reprint of 3rd edn] (Fort Wayne, Indiana: Round Tower Books, 1995) pp. ii–xi. On the imbalance of Musgrave's account *see also* K. Whelan, *Tree of Liberty* p. 138 and J. Smyth, 'Anti-Catholicism, conservatism and conspiracy: Sir Richard Musgrave's *Memoirs of the Different Rebellions in Ireland*' in *Eighteenth-Century Life* 22 (Nov. 1998).
5. For the theology and polity of Irish Presbyterianism, *see* T. Witherow, *Historical and literary memorials of Presbyterianism in Ireland* (London and Belfast, 1880), C. Porter, *Irish Presbyterian biographical sketches* (Belfast, 1883), J. M. Barkley, *Short history of the Presbyterian church in Ireland* (Belfast: Presbyterian Publications Board, [1960]) and P. Brooke, *Ulster Presbyterianism: the historical perspective 1610–1970* (New York and London, 1987). For the political dimension *see* I. R. McBride, *Scripture politics: Ulster Presbyterians and Irish radicals in the late eighteenth century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998).
6. Andrews, *Unitarian Radicalism* Chapter 2.
7. Their theology was generally Arminian rather than Arian: 'Calvin, not Athanasius, was to be the main victim of the New Light.' (McBride p. 45.)
8. W. Drennan, *Letter to the Right Honourable Charles James Fox* (Dublin, 1806) p. 8.
9. [J. Kirkpatrick], *Historical essay upon the loyalty of the Presbyterians in Great Britain and Ireland from the Reformation to this present year 1713* (Belfast, 1713) p. 152.
10. McBride [note 5] p. 4.
11. McBride, p. 97; D. N. Doyle, *Ireland, Irishmen and revolutionary America, 1760–1820* (Dublin and Cork: Mercier Press, 1981) p. 161. 'Major Cartwright' had served in the navy in the 1780s, but owed his military rank to service in the Lincolnshire militia 1775–90.
12. Witherow, p. 125. The 1768 Belfast edition of *The Messiah* was followed by a posthumous Dublin edition in 1811.
13. Philander fails to find a Christian denomination that will admit him without requiring subscription to a creed or a particular interpretation of the scriptures.
14. J. Cameron, *Theophilus and Philander, a dialogue containing remarks on the Rev. Mr McDowell's second letter to the supposed author of the 'Catholic Christian'* (Belfast, 1772) in Witherow, p. 135. In his *Second letter* to Cameron (Belfast, 1771) McDowell had defined 'New Light' as 'a compilation of old heresies revived and reduced to one system' which consists only 'in acknowledging no Lord over the conscience but Jesus Christ, and no standard of faith but the Holy Scriptures'. (*See* Witherow, pp. 153–4)
15. Witherow, p. 130. *See* Priestley's 'Address to advocates of the present civil establishment' in *History of the corruptions of Christianity* 2 vols (1782) in J. T. Rutt, *Theological and miscellaneous writings of Joseph Priestley, LL.D, FRS, etc* 25 vols (Sterling, Virginia and Bristol 1999: facsimile of London edn, 1817–31) iii pp. 495–504.

16. J. Priestley, *Address to the Protestant Dissenters of all denominations on the approaching election of members of parliament* (1774) in Rutt, xxii p. 491; R. Price, *Observations on the nature of civil liberty, the principles of government and the justice and policy of the war with America* (1776); *Additional observations on the nature and value of civil liberty and the war with America* (1777); and *Observations on the importance of the American revolution and the means of making it a benefit to the world…* (1785). All three of Price's American pamphlets are printed in *Richard Price and the ethical foundations of the American Revolution* ed. B. Peach (Durham, North Carolina, 1979). For the 1789 sermon *see* R. Price, *Discourse on the love of our country* (1790).
17. Burke saw the American Revolution as the belated extension to America of England's 1688 Revolution. *See* E. Burke, *Reflections on the revolution in France: a critical edition* ed. J. C. D. Clark (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001) p. 74: 'The strangest omission in the *Reflections* was any comparison of the French Revolution with the American.'
18. *NS* 8 September 1792. *See* M. Elliott, *Wolfe Tone: prophet of Irish Independence* (Newhaven: Yale University Press, 1989) p. 268.
19. Drennan [note 8] p. 11.
20. Doyle [note 11] p. 51.
21. Doyle, p. 113. On Hutcheson *see* C. Robbins, '"When it is that colonies may turn independent"… Francis Hutcheson (1694–1746)' in *WMQ* 3rd series 11 (1954); and C. Robbins, *The eighteenth-century Commonwealth men* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1959).
22. Doyle, p. 117.
23. Doyle, pp. 156, 160.
24. *See* T. Lindsey to W. Tayleur, 1 March 1791, in H. McLachan, *Letters of Theophilus Lindsey* (London and Manchester, 1920) p. 67.
25. Doyle, p. 155.
26. Doyle, p. 164.
27. M. Elliott, *Partners in revolution: the United Irishmen and France* (Newhaven and London: Yale University Press, 1982) p. 212.
28. McBride, pp. 113–14.
29. McBride, p. 117.
30. T. Clark to W. Weir, 17 May 1771 in McBride, p. 117. *See also* J. C. D. Clark, *The language of liberty 1660–1782: political discourse and social dynamic in the Anglo-American world* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) and *The Marquis de la Fayette's statement of his own conduct and principles, translated from the French and most respectfully inscribed to the Whig club* 2nd edn (1793) p. 43.
31. McBride, p. 119.
32. W. Drennan to M. McTier, 13 December 1777 in *Drennan Letters* ed. D. A. Chart (Belfast: HMSO 1931) pp. 3–4; *see* K. Whelan, 'The Green Atlantic in the eighteenth century' in K. Wilson (ed.) *A new imperial history: culture, identity and modernity in Britain and the empire 1660–1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) p. 223 for United Irishmen who were in their teens during the American war.
33. M. McTier to W. Drennan, 7 July [1778] in *Letters*, p. 7. Cf N. J. Curtin, 'Symbols and rituals of United Irish mobilisation' in *Ireland and the French Revolution* ed. H. Gough and D. Dickson, (Dublin, 1990).

34. W. Drennan to M. McTier 2 March [1778] (Drennan Papers) in McBride, p. 120. On James Napper Tandy's 3000-signature Dublin petition to George III pleading for conciliation with America *see* D. Dickson, *New foundations: Ireland 1660–1800* (Dublin and Portland, Oregon: Irish Academic Press, 2000) p. 158.
35. R. B. McDowell, *Irish public opinion 1750–1800* (Faber, 1944) p. 43.
36. *HJ* 9 September 1778.
37. *New foundations*, p. 159.
38. *HJ* 8 October 1777.
39. McDowell, p. 49; *see also* Doyle's longer list p. 166.
40. 'Rules and regulations of the first regiment of Dublin infantry' (NLI MS 52) in McDowell, p. 114.
41. *Manuscripts etc of James, 1st Earl of Charlemont 1745–99* 2 vols (Historical Manuscripts Commission, 1891–94) i p. 42.
42. For full text of the address to Priestley *see* Rutt i. 2 pp. 218–21.
43. A. T. Q. Stewart, *A deeper silence: the hidden roots of the United Irish movement* (London and Boston: Faber, 1943) p. 22.
44. M. R. O'Connell, *Irish politics and social conflict in the age of the American Revolution* (Philadelphia, 1965) p. 320.
45. Stewart, pp. 36–7.
46. *See* Stewart, p. 129 for Joy's account, and pp. 145–6 for Charlemont's correspondence with Rowan on the Catholic question.
47. Stewart, pp. 44–5.
48. W. E. H. Lecky, *History of Ireland in the eighteenth century* 5 vols (Longman, 1898) iii p. 81.
49. [W. Drennan], *Address to the Volunteers of Ireland, by the author of a letter to Edmund Burke, Esq., containing reflections on patriotism, party spirit, and the union of free nations* (Dublin, 1781) p. 13.
50. W. Drennan, *Letters of Orellana, an Irish helot to the seven northern counties not represented in the national assembly of delegates, held at Dublin, October, 1784, for obtaining a more equal representation of the people in the parliament of Ireland* (Dublin, 1785) p. 3.
51. W. Drennan to W. Bruce, 15 May 1785 and 7 February 1784 (PRONI Drennan-Bruce Papers) in Stewart, p. 137.
52. *Orellana*, pp. 10, 8.
53. *Orellana*, pp. 15–16.
54. *Orellana*, p. 35.
55. Stewart, p. 138.
56. W. Drennan to S. McTier 21 May 1791 in *Drennan Letters* [note 32] p. 54.
57. N. J. Curtin, *The United Irishmen: popular politics in Ulster and Dublin, 1791–1798* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994) p. 51.
58. Curtin, p. 31.
59. US Constitution, Amendment II (1791); cf English Bill of Rights (1689): 'That the Subjects which are Protestant may have Arms for their Defence suitable to their Conditions and as allowed by Law.'
60. W. Drennan, *Letter to his Excellency Lord Fitzwilliam, lord lieutenant, etc, of Ireland* (Dublin, 1795) p. 24 in Curtin, p. 30; cf M. Elliott, *The Catholics of Ulster: a history* (Penguin Press, 2000) p. 241.
61. *See* R. B. McDowell, *Ireland in the Age of Imperialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979) pp. 351–2. On the Dublin National Guard see

Autobiography of Archibald Hamilton Rowan ed. W. H. Drummond (Dublin, 1840) in facsimile edn with introduction by McDowell (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1972) p. 156.

62. Curtin, p. 37. *See* McBride, 'William Drennan and the Dissenting Tradition' in D. Dickson, D. Keogh and K. Whelan, *The United Irishmen: republicanism, radicalism and rebellion* (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 1993) p. 61; and *Scripture politics,* p. 166.
63. Elliott, *Catholics of Ulster*, p. 213; the first quotation comes from Tone and is cited in Elliott, *Wolfe Tone* [note 18] p. 411.
64. W. Drennan to S. McTier 19 December 1792 in *Letters* pp. 108–9; suggested preparations for Dungannon are in the same letter.
65. W. Drennan to S. McTier [December 1792] in *Letters*, p. 117.
66. M. Elliott, *Partners in revolution*, [note 27] p. 30.
67. But *see* Elliott, *Watchmen in Sion: the Protestant idea of liberty* (Derry, 1985).
68. *NS* 12 and 15 September 1792.
69. *NS* 20 February 1793; cf Grattan who argued in Parliament that the British war effort must be supported.
70. *See* Curtin, pp. 208–10.
71. Elliott, *Partners in revolution*, pp. 74, 67–8.
72. *NS* 15 December 1792 and 10 October 1792; *see also* N. J. Curtin, 'The transformation of the Society of United Irishmen into a mass-based revolutionary organization, 1794–6' in *IHS* 24/96 (Nov. 1985) pp. 471–3; and N. J. Curtin, 'The United Irish organization in Ulster: 1795–8' in Dickson, Keogh and Whelan [note 62]; for 'Jacobin' clubs in Dublin *see* J. Smyth, *The men of no property: Irish radicals and popular politics in the late eighteenth century* (London and New York 1992; reprinted 1998) pp. 147–51.
73. N. J. Curtin, 'Symbols and rituals' [note 33] p. 73.
74. W. J. MacNeven, *Pieces of Irish history illustrative of the catholics of Ireland, of the origin and progress of the united Irishmen; and of their transactions with the Anglo-Irish government* (New York, 1807) p. 74.
75. Curtin, *United Irishmen* [note 57] p. 119.
76. L. M. Cullen, 'The 1798 Revolution in its eighteenth-century context' in P. J. Corish (ed.) *Radicals, rebellions and establishments* (Belfast, 1985) and 'The internal politics of the United Irishmen' in Dickson, Keogh and Whelan [note 62]; and also Dickson, 'Paine in Ireland' in same volume.
77. S. Connolly, 'Catholicism in Ulster' in P. Roebuck (ed.) *Plantation to partition; essays in Irish history in honour of J. L. McCracken* (Belfast, 1981) pp. 168–9; McDowell, *Age of imperialism* [note 61] p. 462; Elliott, *Partners in revolution*, pp. 40–2.
78. *FJ* 8 January 1793.
79. M. Elliott, 'The Defenders in Ulster' in Dickson, Keogh and Whelan [note 62] pp. 222–5; *see* R. Gillespie and H. O'Sullivan (eds), *The Borderlands: essays on the history of the Ulster-Leinster border* (Belfast, 1989).
80. L. M. Cullen, *The emergence of modern Ireland, 1600–1900* (Batsford, 1981) p. 57.
81. *See* J. Sweetman, *A refutation of the charges attempted to be made against the secretary of the sub-committee of the Catholics of Ireland, particularly of abetting the Defenders* (Dublin, 1793).

82. Elliott, *Wolfe Tone*, pp. 219–20; *see* T. Dunne, 'Popular ballads, revolutionary rhetoric and politicisation' in Gough and Dickson [note 33].
83. Elliott, *Catholics of Ulster*, p. 243.
84. *NS* 30 March 1795.
85. L. M. Cullen, 'Political structures of the Defenders' in Gough and Dickson pp. 124–8.
86. J. Quigley, *The life of the Rev. James Coigley, observations upon his trial, and an address to the people of Ireland, and several interesting letters, all written by himself during his confinement in Maidstone gaol* (1798) pp. 12–13.
87. Cullen, 'Political structures', p. 124.
88. Quigley, *Life* in Curtin [note 57] p. 158.
89. Cullen, 'Political structures', p. 131. The Defenders sought French help long before the United Irishmen thought of doing so. *See* Dunne [note 82].
90. Curtin, *United Irishmen*, pp. 156–7.
91. Elliott, *Catholics of Ulster*, pp. 244–6, following D. Miller, *Peep o' day boys to Defenders: selected documents on the county Armagh disturbances 1784–96* (Belfast, 1990) pp. 138–9.
92. Elliott, *Catholics of Ulster*, pp. 255, 258.
93. F, Wright, *Two lands in one soil: Ulster politics before home rule* (Dublin, 1996) pp. 42–3.
94. Cullen, 'Political structures', p. 133.
95. J. Smyth, *The men of no property: Irish radicals and popular politics in the late eighteenth century* (Macmillan, 1998 reprint of 1992) p. 43.
96. Smyth, pp. 48–50.
97. *Candid and impartial account of the disturbances in the County of Meath in the years 1792, 1793, 1794, by a County Meath freeholder* (Dublin, 1794) p. 7.
98. Smyth, p. 67.
99. Smyth, pp. 67, 114, 112.
100. Smyth, p. 104; *see also* Cullen, *Modern Ireland* [note 80] Chapter 10.
101. Smyth, p. 120; but *see also* J. Smyth, 'Anti-Catholicism' [note 4] p. 72: 'For Musgrave, in the case of Ireland's abortive revolution, the agents were not hard to track down. He knew who they were before he put pen to paper: the Catholics.'
102. Smyth, *Men of no property*, p. 98.
103. J. Adams, *Defence of the constitutions of government of the United States of America against the attacks of M. Turgot in his Letter to Dr Price…* 3 vols (1774) i p. 208.
104. J. Smyth, 'Popular politicization, Defenderism and the Catholic question' in Gough and Dickson [note 33] p. 109.
105. T. Russell, *Letter to the people of Ireland on the present situation of the country* (Belfast, 1796) p. 23; *Disturbances* [note 97] p. 8.
106. Whelan, *Tree of liberty* [note 1] pp. 75–8, citing J. Burk, *The cry of the poor for bread* (Dublin, 1795) and D. Taafe, *Ireland's mirror exhibiting a picture of her present state, with a glimpse of her future prospects* (Dublin, 1796).
107. Whelan, *Tree of liberty*, pp. 114–15.
108. M. Edgeworth to M. Ruxton 20 April 1795 in *Memoirs of Richard Lovell Edgeworth begun by himself and concluded by his daughter, Maria Edgeworth*, 2 vols. (1820) i pp. 205–6. *See* Whelan, p. 119.

109. T. Pelham to General Lake 3 March 1797 (NLI Knox MS 56) and Camden to Portland 9 March 1797 (PRO HO 100/69/132–3) both in Whelan p. 125.
110. Whelan, *Tree of liberty*, p. 113.
111. Whelan, 'Re-interpreting the 1798 Rebellion in County Wexford' in D. Keogh and N. Furlong (eds), *The mighty wave: the 1798 rebellion in Wexford* (Dublin, 1996) p. 34; Whelan, 'Politicisation in the county of Wexford' in Gough and Dickson [note 33] p. 156; but cf Cullen [note 80].
112. S*ee* Whelan 'Politicisation' pp. 172–3 for the close kinship ties that helped to hold together the United Irish leadership in Wexford.
113. Whelan, 'Politicisation', p. 175.
114. Curtin, *United Irishmen*, p. 3.
115. Whelan, *Tree of liberty*, p. 137.

2 Musgrave's *Rebellions*

1. Musgrave, *Memoirs of the different rebellions in Ireland* [1.4] (1801 edn) pp. vi–vii; for an analysis of the book's propagandist purpose and its place in antijacobin conspiracy theories *see* Smyth [1.4 and 1.101].
2. *MR* new series 37 (Mar. 1802) pp. 278–9; on Cornwallis's resignation *see* P. Geoghenan, *The Irish Act of Union: a study in high politics 1798–1801* (Dublin and London, 1999) Chapter 8.
3. *MR* 37 (Mar. 1802) pp. 275–6.
4. *CR* 36 (Sep. 1802) p. 36.
5. *MM* 13 (supplementary number, 20 July 1802) p. 632.
6. *Rebellions* (1801) p. 565 in *AJR* 11 (Jan. 1802) pp. 45–6. For full title *see* [1.4].
7. Musgrave, *A letter on the present situation of public affairs* (1794) pp. 31–5; see *MR* 16 (Apr. 1795) pp. 430–7. For Musgrave's social background in Co. Waterford *see* Dickson [1.4] pp. iii–iv.
8. *AJR* 10 (Nov. 1801) p. 383 and 11 (Jan. 1802) p. 45.
9. *AJR* 10 (Oct. 1801) p. 152.
10. T. Pakenham, *The year of liberty: the story of the great Irish rebellion of 1798* 2nd edn (Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1997) p. 14.
11. *MR* 37 (Mar. 1802) p. 276.
12. *Rebellions*, p. 302.
13. *Rebellions*, p. 305.
14. *Rebellions*, p. 45.
15. Whelan [1.1] p. 137; cf Dickson [1.4] p. viii.
16. Cullen [1.80] pp. 20–1.
17. Cullen [1.80] pp. 210–18; for social comparison with other counties *see* pp. 219–33.
18. Veridicus [Musgrave], *Concise account of the material events and atrocities which occurred in the present rebellion, with the causes which produced them and an answer to Veritas's vindication of the catholic clergy of the town of Wexford* (Dublin, 1799) pp. 2–3.
19. Veridicus, pp. 11–15.
20. Veridicus, p. 17.

21. Veridicus, pp. 22–4.
22. Veridicus, pp. 31–2.
23. Veridicus, pp. 39–40.
24. *AJR* 4 (Sep. 1798) p. 81; *Rebellions*, p. 373. *See also* J. Kelly, 'Conservative Protestant political thought in late eighteenth-century Ireland' in S. Connolly (ed.) *Political ideas in eighteenth-century Ireland* (Dublin, 2000).
25. *CR* 36 (Sep. 1802) p. 36.
26. *CR* 36 (Sep. 1802) p. 39.
27. *Reply of the Right Rev. Doctor Caulfield, Roman-Catholic bishop, and of the Roman-Catholic clergy of Wexford to the misrepresentations of Sir Richard Musgrave, baronet* (Dublin, 1801) in *CR* 36 (Oct. 1802) p. 177.
28. *CR* 36 (Oct. 1802) pp. 181–2.
29. *MR* 37 (Mar. 1802) pp. 331–2.
30. T. Townshend, *Part of a letter to a noble earl, containing a very short comment on the doctrines and facts of Sir Richard Musgrave's quarto and vindicating the Yeomanry and Catholics of the city of Cork* (Dublin, 1801) in *MR* 37 (Mar. 1802) pp. 330–1.
31. [Musgrave] *Observations on the reply of the Right Reverend Dr Caulfield, Roman-Catholic bishop, and of the Roman-Catholic clergy of Wexford, to the misrepresentations of Sir Richard Musgrave, bart., and on other writers who have animadverted on the 'Memoirs of the Irish Rebellions'* (Dublin, 1802) p. 64.
32. *Observations*, p. 63 in *CR* 36 (Oct. 1802) p. 188.
33. *Rebellions*, Appendix pp. 170–2.
34. *Rebellions*, Appendix pp. 171–5. *See also* Archbishop Troy, *Pastoral instructions in the duties of Christian citizens* (Dublin, 1793).
35. *Rebellions*, Appendix p. 174n.
36. *AJR* 11 (Feb. 1802) pp. 158–9.
37. *Rebellions*, p. 179 in *AJR* 10 (Nov. 1801) p. 251.
38. *Rebellions*, p. 118.
39. *See* M. L. Kennedy, *The Jacobin clubs in the French Revolution: the middle years* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988).
40. *Rebellions*, p. 108.
41. *MR* 37 (Mar. 1802) pp. 282–3.
42. *Rebellions*, p. 631 in *AJR* 11 (Jan. 1802) p. 49. The emphasis is the reviewer's.
43. *Rebellions*, p. 108.
44. *Rebellions*, pp. 116–17.
45. *AJR* 10 (Nov. 1801) p. 248; but for Musgrave's violent criticism of Burke *see* J. Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative: reaction and orthodoxy in Britain c.1760–1832* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993) pp. 96–8.
46. *Rebellions*, p. 124.
47. W. S. Dickson, *Narrative of the confinement of and exile of William Steele Dickson, D.D…* (Dublin, 1812) pp. 24–6.
48. W. S. Dickson, *Sermon on the propriety and advantages of acquiring the knowledge and use of arms in time of public danger. Preached before the Echlinville Volunteers on Sunday, March 28, 1779* (Belfast, 1779).
49. Dickson, *Narrative*, pp. 110–15, reprinted in Witherow [1.5] p. 240. *See also* C. Porter [1.5] pp. 10–15. Dickson never quite denied that he was elected Adjutant-General of the United Irish forces in Co. Down.
50. *Rebellions*, p. 185.

51. *See* Witherow [1.5] for text of the first 'Billy Bluff' letter; for Montgomery's tribute *see* Irish *Unitarian Magazine* ii (1824) p. 331.
52. J. Porter, *Wind and weather. A sermon on the late providential storm which dispersed the French fleet off Bantry Bay, preached to the congregation of Greyabbey on Thursday, February 16, 1797, being the fast day appointed by government for thanksgiving* (Belfast, 1797); *see also* C. Porter [1.5] pp. 17–19.
53. *Rebellions*, Appendix xii. For a modern assessment of Dissenting ministers in the Rebellion *see* D. Miller, 'Presbyterianism and "modernization" in Ulster' in C. H. E. Philpin (ed.) *Nationalism and popular protest in Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).
54. *Rebellions*, Appendix ix.
55. *Rebellions*, p. 119.
56. *Rebellions*, p. 154.
57. *Rebellions*, Appendix vi.
58. *Rebellions*, Appendix vi.
59. *Rebellions*, Appendix vi; for Price and Priestley *see* Chapter 1 above.
60. *Rebellions*, p. 188.
61. *Rebellions*, p. 185, where the figures are given in words.
62. *Rebellions*, Appendix x.
63. *Rebellions*, p. 133.
64. *Rebellions*, p. 137.
65. *Rebellions*, pp. 576–7.
66. *Rebellions*, p. 579.
67. *AJR* 11 (Feb. 1802) p. 155.
68. *AJR* 11 (Feb. 1802) pp. 160–1.
69. John Gifford [John Richards Green], *History of the political life of the right honourable William Pitt including some account of the times in which he lived* 3 vols (1809); *see* iii pp. 249–70. *BC* 37 (Feb. 1811) notes (p. 115) that the materials from which Gifford's narrative of the 1798 Rebellion is drawn are 'common and obvious'.
70. *See* next chapter.

3 Musgrave as Reviewer

1. F. Plowden, *Historical review of the state of Ireland, from the invasion of that country under Henry II to its union with Great Britain on the 1st January 1801* 2 vols [vol. 2 in two parts] (1803) i pp. iii–iv.
2. Plowden, i p. 33.
3. F. Plowden, *A postliminious preface to the historical review of Ireland, containing a statement of the author's communications with the Right Hon. Henry Addington, and some of his colleagues upon the subject of that work, some strictures upon the falsities of the British Critic…* (1804) in *MR* 47 (June 1805) pp. 159–60.
4. *MR* 47 (June 1805) p. 161. *See also* Geogehan [2.2] chapter 8.
5. *MR* 47 (June 1805) pp. 162–3.
6. *MR* 47 (June 1805) pp. 164–8.
7. *MR* 47 (June 1805) pp. 169–70.
8. *MR* 47 (June 1805) p. 176.
9. *MR* 47 (June 1805) p. 178.

10. *See* bound volumes of the original borrowing register, Bristol Reference Library.
11. *CR* 3rd series 1 (June 1805) p. 114.
12. *MR* 47 (June 1805) p. 179.
13. *CR* 1 (June 1805) pp. 115–16.
14. *CR* 1 (June 1805) pp. 118, 121.
15. *CR* 1 (June 1805) pp. 124–5.
16. *CR* 1 (June 1805) p. 126
17. *BC* 22 (Nov. 1803) p. 464.
18. *BC* 23 (Feb. 1804) p. 184n; 23 (Mar. 1804) pp. 293, 301.
19. *BC* 22 (Nov. 1803) p. 461.
20. *BC* 23 (Jan. 1804) p. 28.
21. *BC* 23 (Feb. 1804) p. 183.
22. *BC* 22 (Nov. 1803) p. 463.
23. *BC* 22 (Nov. 1803) p. 464; 23 (Mar. 1804) p. 301.
24. *BC* 23 (Jan. 1804) p. 18n.
25. *BC* 22 (Dec. 1803) pp. 650, 654.
26. *BC* 23 (Jan. 1804) pp. 35–6.
27. *BC* 23 (Jan. 1804) p. 29.
28. *BC* 23 (Jan. 1804) p. 32.
29. Lord Clare's speech on the second reading of the Catholic Bill (1793) in *BC* 23 (Jan. 1804) p. 28; the 'conceding system' appears in *BC* (Feb. 1804) p. 181.
30. *BC* 23 (Feb. 1804) p. 189.
31. *BC* 23 (Feb. 1804) pp. 181–4.
32. *BC* 23 (Mar. 1804) pp. 296–7.
33. *BC* 23 (Mar. 1804) p. 302.
34. Plowden's work was first noticed by *BC* more than 18 months before reviews appeared in *CR* and *MR*.
35. [R. Musgrave], *Strictures upon an historical review of the state of Ireland by Francis Plowden, Esq., or a justification of the conduct of English government of that country from the reign of Henry II to the union of Great Britain and Ireland* (1804).
36. *Strictures*, p. 3. For the *Postliminious preface* see [note 3].
37. *AJR* 22 (Sep. 1805) pp. 1–17 [wrongly numbered 449 ff.]; *AJR* 24 (May 1805) pp. 20–37; *AJR* 24 (June 1805) pp. 121–35; *AJR* 24 (July 1805) pp. 231–48; *AJR* 26 (Mar. 1807) pp. 230–47; *AJR* 27 (July 1807) pp. 230–45.
38. *AJR* 22 (Sep. 1805) pp. 1–2 [449–50].
39. *AJR* 22 (Sep. 1805) p. 3 [451].
40. *AJR* 22 (Sep. 1805) pp. 4–5 [452–3].
41. *AJR* 22 (Sep, 1805) p. 6 [454].
42. *Strictures*, pp. 19–20 in *AJR* 22 (Sep. 1805) p. 13 [461].
43. *AJR* 24 (May 1806) pp. 20–1.
44. *Strictures*, p. 32 in *AJR* 24 (May 1806) p. 21, and *BC* 22 (Dec. 1803) p. 650.
45. *AJR* 24 (May 1806) p. 27n.
46. *AJR* 24 (May 1806) p. 20. Cf *Strictures*, p. 55.
47. F. Plowden, *The case stated…occasioned by the Act of Parliament lately passed for the relief of the English Roman Catholics* [1791] in *AJR* 24 (June 1806) p. 121. The quotation is repeated in *AJR* 27 (July 1807) p. 240; *AJR* 38

(Apr. 1810) p. 353; *AJR* 40 (Dec. 1811) p. 339; *AJR* 42 (May 1812) p. 20; *AJR* (Aug. 1812) pp. 377–8; *AJR* 44 (March 1813) p. 304; and *AJR* 45 (July 1813) pp. 50–1.

48. *AJR* 24 (June 1806) pp. 121–2.
49. *AJR* 24 (June 1806) pp. 127–8, 128n.
50. Sir John Davies, *A discoverie of the true cause of why Ireland was never entirely subdued, nor brought under obedience to the crown of England, until the beginning of his Majestie's happie reign* (1612) 3rd edn (Dublin, 1666) p. 8.
51. Davies, p. 133.
52. *AJR* 24 (July 1806) p. 231.
53. *AJR* 24 (July 1806) p. 231; *Strictures*, p. 44 in *AJR* 24 (July 1806) p. 233.
54. *Strictures*, p. 58 in *AJR* 24 (July 1806) p. 248.
55. *AJR* 27 (July 1807) pp. 240, 240n.
56. Plowden, *State of Ireland*, p. 339 in *AJR* 27 (July 1807) p. 243.
57. *Strictures*, p. 92n in *AJR* 27 (July 1807) p. 243n.
58. *AJR* 27 (July 1807) p. 244n.
59. *AJR* 27 (July 1807) pp. 244–5.
60. *AJR* 13 (Nov. 1802) p. 328.
61. *AJR* 19 (Nov. 1804) pp. 225–38.
62. 'Important considerations on the late and present state of Ireland, in cursory remarks on Mr Francis Plowden's miscellaneous works, and in strictures on his postliminious preface, and on some writers whom he has quoted' in *AJR* 19 (Nov. 1804) pp. 238–49, where the correspondent is described as one whose 'knowledge and information respecting the History and actual State of Ireland qualify him for discussions of a similar nature'. Also *AJR* 19 (Dec. 1804) pp. 357–66; *AJR* 20 (Jan. 1805) pp. 9–22.
63. *See* [2.69].
64. *Historical letter from F. Plowden, Esq. To Sir R. Musgrave* [in reply to *Strictures*] (1805).
65. *See* preface to F. Plowden, *History of Ireland from its invasion under Henry II to its union with Great Britain*, edited, printed and published by E. Andrews (1831).

4 Contrary Voices

1. E. Hay, *History of the insurrection of the county of Wexford, A.D. 1798 including an account of transactions preceding that event, with an appendix* (Dublin, 1803) and Rev. J. Gordon, *History of the rebellion in Ireland in the year 1798*, 2nd edn (1803).
2. [Sir R. Musgrave], 'Important considerations' [3.62] in *AJR* 19 (Dec. 1804) pp. 364–5. *See also* [R. Musgrave], *Observations on the Remonstrance of the Rev. Peter O'Neill, parish priest of Ballymacoda in the County of Cork* (1801) p. iv, where Musgrave regrets that Hay had escaped hanging.
3. Gordon, p. 359.
4. Gordon, p. xv.
5. Gordon, p. iv.
6. Gordon, p. vii. *CR* 9 (Nov. 1806) p. 245, reviewing Gordon's later 2-volume *History of Ireland from the earliest accounts to the Union with Great Britain in*

1801 (1806) praised his *History of the Rebellion* for displaying 'a degree of candour and impartiality, not very agreeable to either party, but particularly offensive to the loyalists'.

7. Gordon, p. v.
8. Gordon, p. x.
9. Gordon, p. xxiv.
10. Gordon, pp. xxxi–xxxii.
11. Gordon, pp. xi–xii.
12. Gordon, pp. xiii–xv.
13. Gordon, p. x.
14. Gordon, pp. xviii–xix. *See* Musgrave [p. 22 above].
15. Gordon, p. xi.
16. Gordon, p. 341.
17. [J. Stock, Bishop of Killala], *Narrative of what passed at Killala in the county of Mayo and the parts adjacent, during the French invasion in the summer of 1798* (Dublin, 1800) p. 98.
18. *Narrative of Killala*, p. 100 in Gordon, pp. 342–3. Cf *AJR* [3.59].
19. Gordon, p. 313.
20. Gordon, pp. 313–14.
21. Gordon, pp. 312, 315.
22. Gordon, p. 38. He further complains that the bishop 'exhorts the catholic clergy not to suffer, under pain of excommunication, the children of their parishioners to mix with protestants in public places of education'.
23. Gordon, p. 11n. The retraction was prompted by a letter from Hay; *see* Gordon, Appendix 8.
24. Gordon, p. 4.
25. Gordon, p. 7.
26. Gordon, p. 9.
27. Gordon, pp. 16–18.
28. Gordon, pp. 19–20.
29. Gordon, p. 15.
30. Gordon, p. 20.
31. Gordon, p. 24.
32. Gordon, p. xxv.
33. Gordon, pp. 20–1. Drennan regarded Gordon's history as 'tolerably impartial in the military detail, and would be in the political, did he venture to trace the causes more fully'. *Drennan Letters* [1.32] p. 311.
34. Gordon, p. 328.
35. Gordon, pp. viii and xxxiii.
36. Hay, *History of the insurrection* [note 1] pp. ii–iii.
37. Hay, pp. iv–v.
38. Hay, p. vi.
39. Musgrave (1801) p. 371.
40. *Authentic detail of the extravagant and inconsistent conduct of Sir Richard Musgrave, Baronet; with a full refutation of his slander against 'Edward Hay', wherein the glaring contradictions between the History of the Irish Rebellions and the other productions of the author are clearly pointed out*, p. 2.
41. *Authentic detail*, p. 4.
42. *Authentic detail*, p. 10.

43. *Authentic detail*, pp. 11–12.
44. *Authentic detail*, pp. 13–15.
45. *Authentic detail*, pp. 17–18.
46. Hay, p. i.
47. Hay, p. xliii.
48. Hay, p. i.
49. Hay, p. xxxviii.
50. Hay, p. xxxix–xl.
51. Hay, pp. xl–xli.
52. Hay, p. xliv.
53. Hay, p. 13.
54. Hay, p. 18. Christopher Hutchinson was MP for the city of Cork.
55. Hay, pp. 19–20 and Appendix 2.
56. Hay, pp. 20–1.
57. Hay, pp. 23–4, 29
58. Hay, pp. 29–30 and Appendix 4.
59. Musgrave, *Rebellions* (1801) p. 318.
60. Hay, pp. 15, 22.
61. Hay, p. 33.
62. Hay, p. 39.
63. Hay, p. 57.
64. For text of proclamation *see* Hay, pp. 73–4.
65. Hay, p. 75.
66. Hay, p. 67.
67. Hay, pp. 87–8
68. Hay, p. 184.
69. Hay, p. 69. Harvey's proclamation of 6 June 1798 contains the explicit warning 'that any person or persons who shall take upon them to kill or murder any person or prisoner, burn any house, or commit any plunder, without special written orders from the commander in chief, shall suffer death'.
70. Hay, p. 204.
71. Hay, pp. 242, 253.
72. Downshire Papers, D. 607/1456 in Pakenham [2.10] p. 56.
73. Hay, pp. 49–50.
74. Hay, p. 68. Cf *Observations* [note 2].
75. Hay, p. 324.
76. Hay, pp. 302–3.
77. *AJR* 19 (Dec. 1804) pp. 364–5.
78. *AJR* 19 (Dec. 1804) p. 364.

5 Debating the Union

1. For text of the Act of Union *see* W. C. Costin and J. S. Watson, *Law and working of the constitution: documents 1660–1914* 2 vols (Black, 1952) ii pp. 20–8. *See also* J. G. A. Pocock, 'The Union in British history' in *TRHS* (6th series) x (2000) p. 195: 'If American independence…leaves the structures of empire in church and state much as they had been before it, the

Union with Ireland is revolutionary in the sense that it deeply transforms them as the revolution of 1688 had begun doing a century before.'

2. A. Jackson, 'The Irish Act of Union', *History Today* 51 (Jan. 2001) p. 23.
3. Musgrave to T. Percy 15 January 1799, NLI MS 4157 in Whelan [1.1] p. 139. Musgrave added: 'My fears for the Protestant state have made me a warm advocate of the Union.'
4. F. Plowden, *History of Ireland from its union with Great Britain in January 1801 to October 1810* 3 vols (Dublin, 1811). For Musgrave's attitude to Plowden on the Union *see* chapters 2 and 3 above.
5. Plowden, *State of Ireland* [3.1] ii p. 803.
6. *State of Ireland*, ii pp. 803n–804n.
7. *State of Ireland*, ii pp. 816–17.
8. *State of Ireland*, ii pp. 817–18.
9. *State of Ireland*, ii pp. 822–3.
10. *State of Ireland*, ii p. 823.
11. *State of Ireland*, ii pp. 822, 824.
12. [Sir R. Musgrave], *Strictures on Plowden's History* [3.35], pp. 172–3.
13. *CR* 3rd series 1 (June 1805) p. 114. *See* [3.11].
14. *State of Ireland*, ii p. 829. Parnell, great-grandfather of Charles Stewart Parnell, was dismissed from the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer in Ireland, because of his opposition to the Union. See *Correspondence of Charles 1st Marquis Cornwallis* ed. C. Ross, 3 vols (1861) iii p. 38.
15. *State of Ireland*, ii p. 830.
16. *State of Ireland*, ii p. 836. When deprived of his office as a judge in Admiralty for misappropriation (1830), Barrington published *Historic memoirs of Ireland comprising secret records of the national Convention, the Rebellion and the Union* 2 vols (1833).
17. *State of Ireland*, ii p. 838.
18. *State of Ireland*, ii p. 841.
19. *State of Ireland*, ii p. 842.
20. Plowden (ii p. 852) gives the result as 105 votes for the amendment to 106 votes against.
21. *State of Ireland*, ii p. 852.
22. *State of Ireland*, ii p. 863.
23. *State of Ireland*, ii pp. 870, 872.
24. *State of Ireland*, ii p. 883. Commons debate of 22 January 1799.
25. *State of Ireland*, ii p. 891.
26. *State of Ireland*, ii p. 898.
27. Cornwallis to Pitt 25 September 1798 in *Cornwallis Correspondence* [note 14], ii pp. 413–14.
28. Clare to Castlereagh 16 October 1798 in *Correspondence of Viscount Castlereagh* ed. Marquis of Londonderry, 4 vols (1848–53) i pp. 393–4; Castlereagh to Camden 22 October 1798 (PRO 30/8/327/19–20).
29. *See* T. Bartlett, *Fall and rise of the Irish nation: the catholic question 1690–1830* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1992) pp. 246–8. *See also* G. C. Bolton, *The passing of the Irish Act of Union; a study in parliamentary politics* (1961) and P. Jupp's refinement of Bolton's arguments in 'Britain and the Union', *TRHS* [note 1] pp. 197–219.
30. Bartlett, pp. 249–50.

31. *State of Ireland*, ii pp. 886, 891–2.
32. *State of Ireland*, ii p. 852.
33. *State of Ireland*, ii p. 919.
34. T. Newenham, *View of the natural, political and commercial circumstances of Ireland* (1809) p. 273.
35. T, Newenham, *An obstacle to the ambition of France; or thoughts on the expediency of improving the political condition of his Majesty's Irish Roman Catholic subjects* (1803).
36. The first nine chapters, seven of the following 12 and most of the 30 appendices are devoted to economic issues.
37. *View of Ireland*, p. vi.
38. *View of Ireland*, pp. vii–viii.
39. *View of Ireland*, p. viii.
40. *View of Ireland*, pp. x–xi. Arthur Young's *Tour in Ireland* (1780) was an honourable exception, but was 30 years out of date.
41. *View of Ireland*, p. xi.
42. *View of Ireland*, pp. xvii–xviii.
43. *View of Ireland*, p. xix.
44. *View of Ireland*, p. xxi.
45. *View of Ireland*, pp. 175–6.
46. *View of Ireland*, pp. 180–1.
47. *View of Ireland*, p. 188.
48. *View of Ireland*, pp. 258–9.
49. *View of Ireland*, pp. 267, 262.
50. *View of Ireland*, pp. 268–9 in *AJR* 33 (June 1809) p. 130.
51. *View of Ireland*, p. 175 in *AJR* 33 (June 1809) p. 128.
52. T. Newenham, *Statistical and historical inquiry into the progress and magnitude of the population of Ireland* (1805).
53. *ER* 14 (April 1809) p. 168.
54. Musgrave, *Strictures* [3.35] pp. 147–8.
55. *View of Ireland*, p. 271. Apart from MacNeven, the names listed are: Rowan, Jackson, Tandy, Emmet, Bond, Neilson, O'Connor, Sheares, Tone, Fitzgerald, Russel, Harvey, Lewins, Crosbie and Grogan.
56. *View of Ireland*, p. 272.
57. *View of Ireland*, pp. 272–3. Cf A. T. Q. Stewart, 'Transformation of Presbyterian radicalism in the North of Ireland, 1792–1826', QUB PhD thesis 1956.
58. *View of Ireland*, p. 273.
59. *View of Ireland*, p. 275.
60. F. Plowden, *Historical disquisition concerning the rise, progress, nature and effects of the Orange societies in Ireland intended as an introduction to a work in hand to be entitled The History of Ireland from its Union with Great Britain… See also* [note 4].
61. *AJR* 19 (Nov. 1804) p. 228.
62. *Orange societies*, p. iv.
63. *Orange societies*, p. 1.
64. *Orange societies*, pp. 3–4.
65. *Orange societies*, p. 12.
66. *Orange societies*, pp. 107–8.

67. *Ireland from the Union* [note 4] i pp. 26–7.
68. *Ireland from the Union*, i pp. 50–1.
69. Pitt to George III 31 January 1801 (CUL Add. MS 6958, f. 2836) For longer extracts from the letter *see* W. Hague, *William Pitt the Younger* (HarperCollins, 2004) pp. 469–71.
70. 7 March 1801 *Diaries and correspondence of James Harris 1st Earl of Malmesbury* 4 vols (1804) iv p. 31.
71. 19 August 1804 *Diaries of Silvester Douglas, Lord Glenbervie* ed. F. Bickley 2 vols (1928) i p. 389.
72. *See* Geoghegan [2.2] p. 225: 'The King's illness changed everything'. For the wider context *see* [2.2] chapters 7, 8, 11, especially pp. 168–85. I regard Geoghegan's reconstruction of the resignation episode as entirely persuasive, but *see also* his resumé of other historians' verdicts [2.2] pp. 211–19, and his preface p. viii.
73. *Ireland from the Union*, i p. 42.
74. *Antijacobin Review and true Churchman Magazine, or Monthly Political and Literary Censor* [*AJR*] 36 (Aug. 1810) p. 445.
75. [W. Drennan], *Protest from one of the People of Ireland against a Union with Great Britain* (Dublin, 1800) pp. 4, 8.
76. W. Drennan, *Letter to the Right Honourable William Pitt* (Dublin, 1799) pp. 4–5.
77. *Letter to Pitt*, p. 9.
78. *Letter to Pitt*, p. 11.
79. W. Drennan, *Second Letter to the Right Honourable William Pitt* (Dublin, 1799) p. 5.
80. *Second letter*, p. 35.
81. L. M. Cullen, 'Alliances and misalliances in the politics of the Union' *TRHS* [note 1] pp. 221–41. *See also* in same *TRHS* volume P. M. Geoghenan, 'The Catholics and the Union', James Kelly, 'Popular politics in Ireland and the Act of Union' and S. J. Connolly, 'Reconsidering the Irish Act of Union'.
82. Cullen, *TRHS* [note 1] p. 241.

6 Opposing Emancipation, 1801–12

1. For the pro-Establishment monthlies' attack on Unitarians *see* Andrews [1.2]. For the generally pro-Catholic sympathies of the 1790s and early 1800s *see* J. J. Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative: reaction and orthodoxy in Britain c. 1760–1832* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) especially p. 229: 'In general, the Pittite or Tory or Burkean English press of the 1790s was pro-Catholic'.
2. *AJR* 8 (Feb. 1801) pp. 177–9 on T. McKenna, *Memoire on some questions respecting the project of the Union of Great Britain and Ireland* (Dublin, 1799). McKenna, a Catholic, had supported the Union. In 1803 he would receive a government pension of £300 p.a. 'for his literary services'. The reference to Duigenan is to his published parliamentary speeches, but *see* note 35 below.
3. *Letter to Theobald McKenna, Esq., the Catholic advocate, in reply to the calumnies against the Orange institution, contained in his pamphlet* (Dublin, n.d.) in *AJR* 8 (Feb. 1801) pp. 180–1. *See also* J. Hamilton, *Letter to Theobald*

McKenna, Esq., occasioned by a publication entitled a memoire on some questions respecting the projected Union (Dublin, 1799).

4. McKenna, pp. 35–6. *See* E. E. Y. Hales, *Revolution and Papacy 1769–1846* (1960) p. 129.
5. J. Reeves, *Considerations on the coronation oath to maintain the protestant reformed religion, and the settlement of the Church of England…* (1801) in *BC* 17 (Mar. 1801) pp. 284–9. *See also* Reeves, *Thoughts on the English Government addressed to the quiet good sense of the people of England… Letter the Second* (1799) p. 113: 'The King's Government may go on, in all its functions, without Lords and Commons…without the king *his* parliament is no more'.
6. Drennan, *Letter to Fox* [1.8] p. 11.
7. Drennan, pp. 19–21.
8. Drennan, p. 25.
9. Peter Plymley [Rev. Sydney Smith], *Letters on the subject of the catholics, to my brother Abraham, who lives in the country* 7th edn (1808) pp. 39–40.
10. Plymley, pp. 23–4.
11. Plymley, p. 25.
12. Plymley, p. 31.
13. Plymley, p. 62.
14. Plymley, p. 58.
15. *BC* 18 (Oct. 1801) p. 385.
16. *AJR* 27 (May 1807) p. 98.
17. *AJR* 28 (Oct. 1807) p. 203.
18. *AJR* 27 (June 1807) pp. 213–14.
19. *AJR* 27 (Aug. 1807) pp. 335–6.
20. Duigenan to Archbishop Charles Agar 10 February 1806 in Bartlett [5.29] p. 285. Cf a laudatory description of Fox's ministry in *CR* 3rd series 21 (Oct. 1810).
21. Bartlett, [5.29], p. 290. For Grenville and the veto *see* P. Jupp, *Lord Grenville 1759–1834* (Oxford, 1985) p. 425, and Bartlett, pp. 291–4.
22. *AJR* 29 (Jan–Apr. 1808) pp. ix–xi.
23. *AJR* 29 (Jan. 1808) p. 93.
24. *AJR* 27 (July 1807), pp. 230–45. *See* Chapter 3 above.
25. W. Parnell, *Historical apology for the Irish Catholics* (Dublin and London, 1807) in *MR* 53 (July 1807) p. 295. For his brother, Henry, *see* note 41.
26. W. Parnell in *MR* 53 (July 1807) pp. 296–7. For Plowden's remark *see* [3.2].
27. W. Parnell in *MR* 53 (July 1807) p. 301.
28. *Letter to the Right Honourable Lord Viscount Howick, on the subject of the Catholic Bill…* and *Second Letter* (both Rivingtons, 1807) in *MR* 53 (Aug. 1807) p. 442.
29. *MR* 54 (Sep. 1807) p. 95 on W. Russel, *Catholic Emancipation contended for, and justified from words of eminent statesmen, and the plain deductions of justice and common sense* [1807].
30. *MR* 54 (Sep. 1807) pp. 96.
31. *MR* 54 (Nov. 1807) p. 314 on *Two Dissertations, addressed to a friend, and recommended to the perusal of the advocates for extending the power of the Roman Catholics in this country. By a clergyman.* (1807).
32. *Substance of a speech which ought to have been spoken in a certain assembly, upon the motion made by the Right Hon. Henry Grattan, on the 25th of May, 1808, that*

the petition from the Roman Catholics of Ireland should be referred to a committee of the whole House… (Stockdale, 1809) in *AJR* 34 (Dec. 1809) pp. 404–15 and *AJR* 35 (Jan. 1810) pp. 20–31. Grattan's maiden speech at Westminster was on Fox's motion for a committee on the Catholic question (April 1805).

33. *AJR* 30 (June 1808) pp. 209–10.
34. *AJR* 34 (Nov. 1809) p. 327.
35. P. Duigenan, *The nature and extent of the demands of the Irish Roman Catholics fully explained, in observations and strictures, in a pamphlet entitled 'A history of the penal laws against the Irish Roman Catholics* 2nd edn (1810) in *AJR* 36 (May 1810) pp. 34–54 and (June 1810) pp. 165–77.
36. *AJR* 36 (May 1810) p. 35.
37. *AJR* 36 (June 1810) pp. 167–9. On this question Troy is usually bracketed with Francis Plowden. [3.47]. What Troy actually wrote in his 1793 pastoral charge was that 'the church is infallible in her doctrinal decisions and canons, in *points of faith and morals*; and therefore the catholics are obliged to adhere implicitly, to such decrees and canons of the church assembled in general councils, and confirmed by the Pope as articles of faith'. Similarly the claim of infallibility of general councils relates only to '*points of doctrine*'. Protestant polemicists ignored the limitations implied in the italicized passages, but the Catholic clergy themselves have often found it convenient to blur the boundaries.
38. Duigenan, p. 132 in *AJR* 36 (June 1810) p. 169.
39. Duigenan, p. 142 in *AJR* 36 (June 1810) p. 171. *See* Musgrave [2.27].
40. *AJR* 36 (June 1810) p. 177.
41. *BC* 37 (Jan. 1811) pp. 73–5 on H. Parnell, *History of the penal laws against the Irish Catholics; from the treaty of Limerick to the Union* (Dublin, 1808) and pp. 78–9 on Duigenan [note 35].
42. *BC* 37 (Jan. 1811) p. 74n.
43. *BC* 37 (Jan. 1811) pp. 75–7 on J. Dillon, *Two Memoirs upon the Catholic question, with an essay upon the history and effect of the Coronation Oath…* (1810).
44. *AJR* 36 (July 1810) p. 226 on T. Clarke, *Memoirs of the King's supremacy, of the rise, progress and results of the supremacy of the Pope in different ages and nations, so far as relates to civil affairs* (1809).
45. *AJR* 38 (Jan. 1811) p. 13 on Lord Kenyon, *Observations on the Roman Catholic question* (1810). For Liverpool's earlier speech see p. 88 above.
46. *History of the Inquisitions; including the secret transactions of those horrific tribunals. Illustrated with twelve plates* in *BC* 37 (Mar. 1811) pp. 280–4; *Substance of the speech of Sir John Cox-Hippesley, Bart., on seconding the motion of the Right Honourable Henry Grattan, to refer the petition of the Roman Catholics of Ireland to a committee of the House of Commons, on Friday the 18th May, 1810* (1810) in *AJR* 38 (Apr, 1811) pp. 338–63.
47. *AJR* 39 (May 1811) pp. 61–76 on Pasterini [Charles Walmesley], *General history of the church from her birth to her final triumphant state in heaven, chiefly deduced from the Apocalypse of St John the Apostle* (Dublin: printed 1771, reprinted 1790 and 1800).
48. *Proceedings of the general committee of the Roman Catholics of Ireland, in 1792 and 1793 compared with the proceedings of the Roman Catholic committee in 1810 and 1811* 2nd edn (Dublin: reprinted Stockdale, 1812) in *AJR* 41 (Jan. 1812) pp. 40–7. *See also* [8.10].

49. *Proceedings of the Catholic Committee, as taken from their accredited papers* (Dublin: printed as an unpublished pamphlet) in *AJR* 41 (Jan. 1812) pp. 22–3. *See* Bartlett [5.29] pp. 298–300; for increased involvement of Catholic clergy in the electoral process *see* S. J. Connolly, *Priests and people in pre-famine Ireland* (Dublin, 1982). For the Catholic Committee *see* Chapter 8 below.
50. Printed in *BC* 41 (Jan. 1813) p. 84.
51. *Parliamentary Debates* 22 (21 April 1812) p. 639. Canning cited Liverpool's lukewarmness towards Emancipation as his own reason for declining to join the ministry.
52. *Speech of his Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex, in the House of Lords, on the Catholic question, on Tuesday, April 21, 1812…* (1812) in *CR* 4th series 2 (Sep. 1812) p. 287.
53. *AJR* 42 (May 1812) pp. 14–29 on *Claims of the Roman Catholics considered with reference to the safety of the Established Church, and the rights of religious toleration* (1812). The 1812 volume of *AJR* contains some 190 pages devoted to major discussions of the Catholic question. *See* especially February pp. 172–95 and March pp. 238–6.
54. Tomline, *Charge delivered to the clergy of the diocese of Lincoln, at the triennial visitation of that diocese in May, June and July 1812* (1812) in *AJR* 42 (Aug. 1812) pp. 365–80. George Pretyman took the name Tomline on inheriting an estate on that condition.
55. The quotation (*AJR* 42 p. 377) is from Plowden, *The case stated* [3.47] p. 17.
56. Tomline, p. 16.
57. Tomline, pp. 17–18.
58. Tomline, p. 19.
59. Tomline, p. 22. Cf. *Catholic claims* [note 53] in *AJR* 41 (Apr. 1812) pp. 367–8: complaints against the exclusion of Catholics from 'power in the state' seem to be 'founded upon the fallacious assumption that power is conferred for the benefit of those who possess it. But the truth is that the real object of power is the benefit of those who possess it not – that is the community at large'.
60. Tomline, p. 26.
61. Tomline, p. 31.
62. Tomline, p. 32.
63. Tomline, pp. 35–6.
64. J. Disney, *Remarks on the Bishop of Lincoln's charge, delivered to the clergy of his diocese, 1812* (1812) in *CR* 4th series 3 (Jan. 1813) p. 101.
65. *See* favourable review in *CR* 4th series 2 (Nov. 1812) pp. 462–72 of *Statement* of the *penal laws;* cf *AJR* 43 (Nov. 1812) pp. 274–300.
66. *CR* 4th series 2 (Nov. 1812) p. 466.
67. *CR* 4th series 2 (Nov. 1812) pp. 468–9.
68. *AJR* 41 (Apr. 1812) p. 422.
69. Saurin to Peel 16 March 1813 in *Sir Robert Peel from his private papers* ed. C. S. Parker 2 vols (1891) i pp. 81–2.

7 Opposing Emancipation, 1813–29

1. Peel to Sidmouth 17 August 1816 in Bartlett [5.29] p. 305. The Catholic Board (successor to the Catholic Committee) had by then been suppressed by proclamation. *See* next chapter.

2. *BC* 2nd series 5 (May 1816) pp. 515–16.
3. *AJR* 44 (June 1813) pp. 634–40. For the 1791 Act *see* Costin and Watson [5.1] ii pp. 4–6.
4. *Substance of a speech by Sir J. Cox Hippesley, Bart. in the House of Commons on Tuesday, May 11, 1813, for the appointment of a select committee, on the subject of catholic claims, with notes and an appendix…* (1815) in *BC* 2nd series 5 (May 1816) pp. 515–21. The *BC*'s review reprints (pp. 524–7) from the *Catholic Orthodox Journal* (Apr. 1816) the resolutions opposing the crown veto that were passed at aggregate meetings in Limerick, Waterford and Cork. For Hippesley's unsuccessful resolutions in favour of the crown veto see *AJR* (June 1813) pp. 640–1.
5. *See AJR* 44 (June 1813) p. 634.
6. *Speeches in Parliament of Samuel Horsley, LL.D, FRS, FAS., late Lord Bishop of St Asaph* ed. H. Horsley (London, Edinburgh and Dundee, 1813) in *BC* 41 (Feb. 1813) pp. 170–80 and *BC* 42 (Sep. 1813) pp. 221–30.
7. *Speeches of Horsley* in *BC* 42 (Sep. 1813) pp. 227–9. *See* F. C. Mather, *High Church Prophet: Bishop Samuel Horssley (1733–1806) and the Caroline tradition in the late Georgian Church* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992) pp. 113–15. *See also BC* 41 (Jan. 1813) p. 16, quoting Heneage Horsley as declaring his 'firm conviction that had his father lived to see the present day, the Roman Catholics would have had his parliamentary support'.
8. *Arguments for and against Catholic Emancipation* (1813) in *BC* 42 (Sep. 1813) p. 305.
9. *Analysis of the speech of the Right Honourable George Canning in the House of Commons, June 22, 1812 on the Catholic question…* (1813) in *BC* 42 (Sep. 1813) pp. 305–6.
10. T. Burgess, *The Protestant retrospect* (1813) in *BC* 41 (Feb. 1813) p. 193.
11. 'Miscellanies' in *AJR* 44 (Mar. 1813) p. 303n.
12. G. Burgess, *Remarks on the leading arguments in favour of Catholic Emancipation* 2nd edn (London, Cambridge, Norwich etc, 1813) in *AJR* 45 (July 1813) p. 37.
13. *Remarks* in *AJR* 45 (July 1813) p. 39n.
14. Burgess, *Remarks* in *AJR* 45 (July 1813) pp. 50–1.
15. *Remarks* in *AJR* 45 (July 1813) p. 50n.
16. *AJR* 45 (July 1813) p. 59.
17. *CR* 4th series 3 (June 1813) pp. 578–94 on F. Plowden, *History of Ireland, from its invasion under Henry II to its union with Great Britain* (1812); for 1803 edn *see* [3.1].
18. *CR* 4th series 3 (June 1813) pp. 592–4.
19. *CR* 4th series 3 (Feb. 1813) pp. 214–16.
20. *AJR* 46 (Mar. 1814) p. 249.
21. *The Ecclesiastical supremacy of the crown proved to be the common law of England…* (1814) in *AJR* 46 (Mar. 1814) p. 250. For O'Connell and the 40-shilling freeholders *see* next chapter.
22. *See* R. Dunlop, *Daniel O'Connell and the revival of national life in Ireland* (London and New York, 1900) pp. 81–5. For text of Grattan's Bill and the proposed procedure for ministerial confirmation of episcopal appointments see *AJR* 44 (June 1813) pp. 635–41.
23. Bartlett [5.29] p. 309
24. *BEM* 8 (Oct. 1820) pp. 80–1. *See* Sack [6.1] pp. 18–30 and 235–8 for the successes and failures of right-wing periodicals in the 1820s.

25. *CR* 5th series 1 (Mar. 1815) p. 213. Cf *BC* 2nd series 10 (Apr. 1817) p. 429: 'The revival of the order of Jesuits is indeed striking proof that neither is the temper of Popery changed, nor her spirit extinguished'.
26. *AJR* 54 (Mar. 1818) p. 81; 55 (Sep. 1818) p. 69. In the Authorized Version, the text from Revelation is accorded the almost unique distinction of being printed in capitals. The *Protestant Advocate* (founded in 1812) is described by Sack [6.1] p. 233 as 'a sort of digest of anti-Catholic propaganda taken from various places throughout the three kingdoms throughout history'.
27. BC 2nd series 1 (Jan–June 1814).
28. H. Marsh, *Comparative view of the churches of England and Rome* (London and Cambridge, 1814) in *BC* 2nd series 3 (May 1815) p. 516.
29. *BC* 2nd series 3 (May 1815) pp. 512, 515. But for the rest of 1815 *BC* focuses largely on Unitarians rather than Catholics.
30. *See* [note 2].
31. J. L. Sack, 'Memory of Burke and the memory of Pitt' in *Historical Journal* 39 (Sep. 1987) pp. 636–7.
32. Plowden [3.1] was republished in 1831 (*see* next chapter). *See* Sack [6.1] pp. 236–9 for importance of an anti-Catholic line in maintaining the circulation of Tory periodicals. For the evident relief of O'Connell and the Catholic hierarchy at the failure of Plunket's 1821 Bill, with its stringent tests of episcopal loyalty, *see* Bartlett [5.29] p. 237.
33. *Parliamentary Debates* new series 12 (15 Feb. 1825) pp. 490–1. For O'Connell's Catholic Association *see* next chapter.
34. *BC* 3rd series 1 (Oct. 1825) p. iii.
35. *BC* 2nd series 15 (Apr. 1821) p. 352 on R. Mant, *Charge delivered to the clergy of the diocese of Killaloe, at the primary visitation, Thursday August 8, 1820* (1821); 15 (Apr. 1821) p. 403 on *Sermons by the late very Rev. Isaac Milner, D.D., F.R.S. and F.A.S., Dean of Carlisle, President of Queens' College, Cambridge, and Lucasian professor of Mathematics in that university* 2 vols (1820). See also *BC* 2nd series 19 (Jan. 1823) pp. 79–108 on *Charge delivered at his primary visitation in St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, on Thursday the 24th of October, 1822. By William Magee, D.D., M.R.I.A., & c. Archbishop of Dublin* 2nd edn (1822).
36. *BC* 2nd series 23 (Feb. 1825) pp. 174–5 on C. Butler, *Book of the Roman Catholic Church; in a series of letters addressed to Robt Southey, Esq., LL.D on his 'Book of the Church'* (1825). For *BC*'s review of Southey *see* 21 (May 1824) pp. 449–63; cf hostile reviews in *Universal Review* 1 (Mar. 1824) pp. 81–91 and *Examiner* (17 Oct. 1824) pp. 660–1. The first three volumes of John Lingard's *History of England from the first invasion by the Romans (to the revolution of 1688)* appeared in 1819, subsequent volumes between 1820 and 1830. There were four more editions by 1851. For Cobbett and Emancipation, *see* next chapter.
37. *BEM* 10 (Sep. 1821) p. 227. *See* Sack [6.1] pp. 231n, 236n.
38. *BEM* 15 (Jan. 1824) pp. 7–9.
39. *BEM* 15 (Jan. 1824) p. 10.
40. *BEM* 15 (Mar. 1824) pp. 282–4.
41. *AJR* 13 (Nov. 1802) p. 328.
42. *MM* 2nd series 2 (Dec. 1826) pp. 578–9. For Croly's important but independent status as a supporter of the Establishment *see* Sack [6.1] p. 25.

43. *ER* 41 (Jan. 1825) pp. 357–9.
44. *MM* 2nd series 2 (Dec. 1826) pp. 578–9. Cf *BEM* 15 (Mar. 1824) p. 287: 'The products of the Marquis of Wellesley's marvellous experiments are the resurrection of the Catholic Board, and the greatest possible party madness between Catholics and Protestants.'
45. *See* [6.9].
46. *ER* 43 (Nov. 1825) p. 125 on *Reports and evidence upon the state of Ireland, ordered to be printed by the House of Lords and the House of Commons, sessions 1824–5* (1825) and on Butler [note 36].
47. *ER* 43 (Nov. 1825) p. 129.
48. *ER* 43 (Nov. 1825) pp. 161–2.
49. *BC* 3rd series 1 (Oct. 1825) pp. 147–9 on Rev. Dr H. Philpotts, *Letters to Charles Butler, Esq., on the theological parts of his Book of the Roman Catholic Church, with remarks on certain works of Dr Milner and Dr Lingard, and on some parts of the evidence of Dr Doyle before the two committees of the houses of parliament* (1825).
50. *BC* 3rd series 2 (Apr. 1826) pp. 35–6.
51. *BC* 3rd series 2 (Apr. 1826) pp. 1–4 on W. Phelan and M. O'Sullivan, *Digest of the evidence taken before select committees of both houses of parliament, appointed to inquire into the state of Ireland…* (1826).
52. *BEM* 17 (June 1825) pp. 740–1.
53. *BEM* 18 (July 1825) p. 14.
54. *BC* 3rd series 3 (July 1827) pp. 148, 153–60 on *Reply by J. K. L.* [James Doyle] *to the late charge of the Most Reverend Doctor Magee* (Dublin, 1827). The same notice contains a review of the Archbishop of Cashel's *Charge delivered at the triennial visitation of the province of Munster in the year 1826* (Dublin and London, 1826).
55. *BC* 4th series 2 (July 1827) pp. 188–9. When *BC* added *Quarterly Theological Review and Ecclesiastical Record* to its title in January 1827, it resumed numbering volumes from 1.
56. *BC* 2 (July 1827) p. 166.
57. *BEM* 17 (Mar. 1825) p. 255.
58. *BEM* 15 (Mar. 1824) pp. 288–95. See also *BEM* 16 (Nov. 1824) pp. 491, 504; and *BEM* 15 (May 1824) pp. 495–508.
59. *BC* 3 (Jan. 1828) pp. 2–3 on *Authentic report of the speeches and proceedings of the meeting held at Cavan on the 26th January, 1827, for the purpose of forming a society for promoting the Reformation…* (Dublin, 1827).
60. Whelan [1.1] p. 141 cites the report of the Cavan meeting with its description of Ireland as 'a land of beads not bibles'.
61. *BC* 3 (Jan. 1828) pp. 18–21. For the *New Testament first published by the English college of Rheims, in 1582, with annotations, &c., corrected and revised, and approved of by the Most Rev. Dr Troy, R. C. Archbishop of Dublin* (Dublin, 1816) see *BC* 2nd series 8 (Sep. 1817) pp. 296–308, and *Notes on the preface to the Rhemish Testament printed in Dublin* (1813) in *BC* 9 (Feb. 1818) pp. 113–24.
62. *MM* 2nd series 2 (Sep. 1826) p. 579. On 30 March 1868, in the debates on disestablishment, Gladstone would calculate that, at the then rate of converting Ireland to Protestantism, 'some 1,500 or 2,000 years at least must elapse before we complete the task' in *Speeches on great questions of the day* (Hotten, 1870) p. 158.

63. *BC* 5 (Jan. 1829) p. 117.
64. *BC* 5 (Jan. 1829) pp. 133–4.
65. *BC* 5 (Jan. 1829) pp. 154, 171–2. The 40-page article (pp. 154–94), apart from its richness in dramatic irony, is an almost poignant epitome of *BC*'s quarter-century campaign against Emancipation. On O'Connell's connection with the 40-shilling freeholder vote, *see* next chapter.
66. Bartlett [5.29] p. 242. For the text of the Emancipation Act and of the Irish County Franchise Act (1829) *see* Costin and Watson [5.1] ii pp. 45–55.

8 O'Connell, Emancipation and Repeal

1. For the 1800 speech see *Memoirs of the life and times of the Rt Hon. Henry Grattan* ed by his son, 5 vols (1839–42) v pp. 61–4. For the 1810 Dublin meeting *see* R. Dunlop [7.22] p. 31.
2. For a sympathetic account of the tortuous deliberations and procedural expedients of the Dublin Catholic Committee during 1811 *see* Dunlop, pp. 34–41.
3. *AJR* 40 (Dec. 1811) p. 337.
4. Cited in *AJR* 40 (Dec. 1811) p. 343. The Catholic Committee had talked in 1811 of reviving the Catholic Convention, but it never met.
5. *Proceedings of the General Committee* [6.49] in *AJR* 41 (Jan. 1812) pp. 18–47.
6. *AJR* 41 (Jan. 1812) p. 18.
7. *AJR* 41 (Jan. 1812) pp. 21–5.
8. *AJR* 41 (Jan. 1812) pp. 27–8.
9. *AJR* 41 (Jan. 1812) pp. 30–1 and 40–7. O'Connell proposed a committee of grievances, and was made chairman. For printed extracts from the committee's report, see *AJR* 43 (Nov. 1812) pp. 273–300. For O'Connell's claim that Emancipation must precede more radical reform see *Councillor O'Connell's address to the catholics of Ireland* (Dublin, 1819). Extracts in Dunlop [7.22] pp. 154–5.
10. *AJR* 38 (Apr. 1811) pp. 337–64; 40 (Dec. 1811) pp. 337–58; 41 (Jan. 1812) pp. 18–47; 41 (Feb. 1812) pp. 172–95; 41 (Mar. 1812) pp. 238–62 and 265–75; 41 (Apr. 1812) pp. 356–72 and 422–42.
11. Donoughmore to Hay 27 April 1818 in Bartlett [5.29] p. 306.
12. A. Reynolds, *The Catholic emancipation crisis in Ireland, 1823–29* (Newhaven: Yale University Press, 1954) pp. 11–12.
13. *Correspondence of Daniel O'Connell* ed. M. R. O'Connell 8 vols (Shannon, 1972–80) ii pp. 465–6.
14. *O'Connell Correspondence* iii p. 55.
15. Figures showing the rapid build up of the fund are given in Appendix i of F. O'Ferrall, *Catholic emancipation: Daniel O'Connell and the birth of Irish democracy, 1820–30* (Dublin, 1985).
16. Gregory to Peel 11 April 1824 in Bartlett [5.29] p. 332. On Pasterini *see* [6.47].
17. On the 'Second Reformation' *see* [7.56–64].
18. *See* Elliott [1.60] pp. 275–6 and Miller [2.53] pp. 93–5. Miller points to later attempts to conceal the extent of orthodox Presbyterian involvement in the Rebellion as evidenced by W. D. Killeem's concluding part of J. S. Reid's *History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland* 3rd edn 3 vols (Belfast, 1867) pp. 391–8.

19. Barkley [1.5] pp. 47–8.
20. On Montgomery *see* Brooke [1.5] pp. 149–53; for Presbyterian opposition to O'Connell *see* next chapter.
21. Elliott [1.60] pp. 271–2.
22. O'Connell to the O'Connor Don 23 April 1821 in *O'Connell correspondence* ii p. 319.
23. *BEM* 18 (July 1825) pp. 11, 15–16, 118.
24. *BEM* 18 (July 1825) p. 16. Cf [7.46].
25. *BEM* 18 (July 1825) p. 18.
26. *Speeches of the late Rt Hon. Sir Robert Peel* 4 vols (New York: Kravs reprint, 1972) i p. 61. *See also* B. M. Walker (ed.), *Parliamentary election results in Ireland, 1801–1922* (Dublin, 1978) and O'Connell in *Evidence taken before the select committee…to inquire into the state of Ireland* (1825) p. 205.
27. Lord Donoughmore to F. Hely Hutchinson 9 July 1826 in Bartlett [5.29] p. 339.
28. Goulburn to Peel 18 December 1826 in *Peel private papers* [6.69] i p. 424.
29. O'Connell to Doyle 29 December 1827 in *O'Connell correspondence* iii p. 373. Cf Bartlett [5.29] p. 340.
30. F. Welsh, *Four nations: a history of the United Kingdom* (Harper-Collins paperback, 2003) p. 252.
31. C. H. Teeling, *History of the Irish rebellion of 1798: a personal narrative* (Glasgow, 1828) pp. 3–5.
32. R. R. Madden, *The United Irishmen, their lives and times* 1st series 2 vols (1842) Appendix p. 342. Five more volumes 1843–6; Dublin edition 1858.
33. Teeling, *History*, pp. 12–13. He nevertheless gives credit to Cooke's clemency in releasing him from prison on health grounds, and for 'an amnesty, though not proclaimed' which soon benefited other prisoners (pp. 65–6).
34. Teeling, *History*, pp. 8–9.
35. Teeling, *History*, p. 38.
36. Teeling, *History*, pp. 71–3. Cf. Cullen [1.89] pp. 217–18.
37. Teeling, *History*, p. 74.
38. Teeling, *History*, p. 77.
39. C. H. Teeling, *Sequel to the history of the Irish rebellion of 1798: a personal narrative* (Glasgow, 1832) p. xlviii. *See* pp. 316–35 for Bartholomew Teeling's trial and their father's imprisonment. A combined edition of both *History* and *Sequel* (Glasgow, 1876) is reprinted in facsimile by Irish University Press (Shannon, 1972).
40. *MR* new series 8 (May 1828) p. 60.
41. *MR* new series 8 (May 1828) pp. 73–4.
42. *MR* new series 8 (May 1828) pp. 57–9. *MR* 9 (Dec. 1828), reviewing *Commentary on the memoirs of Wolfe Tone, major-general in the service of the republic of France…* Part I (Paris, 1828), observes (p. 454): 'Ireland at this moment is an armed camp! It is held in military possession as much as France was by the army of occupation after the general peace'.
43. Sir J. Barrington, *Historic memoirs of Ireland* [5.16] The preliminary fragment of this work entitled *Historic anecdotes and secret memoirs of the legislative union between Great Britain and Ireland* (1809) was dismissed by *CR* 2nd series 20 (May 1810) pp. 65–71 as 'trifling as well as expensive'.
44. Sir J. Barrington, *Personal sketches of his own times* 3 vols (Paris, 1827–32) ii p. 202.

45. *Correspondence between the Right Hon. Lord Redesdale… and the Right Hon. The Earl of Fingall* (London and Dublin, 1804) pp. 11–12.
46. Barrington, *Historic memoirs,* i pp. 63–5n.
47. Barrington, *Historic memoirs*, i p. iii.
48. Barrington, *Historic memoirs*, i p. x. The subscribers' list (pp. v–vii) includes King William IV, 'Hs late Majesty George the Fourth', 'His late royal Highness the Duke of York', the dukes of Leinster, Devonshire, Wellington and Bedford, 11 marquesses, 28 earls and 10 viscounts.
49. Barrington, *Historic memoirs*, i p. xxv.
50. Barrington, *Historic memoirs*, i p. xvii he saw no need to amend the preface originally prefixed to the 1809 edition.
51. Barrington, *Historic memoirs*, i p. xxix.
52. Dunlop [7.22] p. 241. For O'Connell's acknowledged debt to the Volunteer Movement *see* W. J. O'N. Daunt, *Personal recollections of the late Daniel O'Connell* 2 vols (1848) i pp. 110–11.
53. Dunlop, pp. 257–67. Church rates were abolished in 1831.
54. *Repeal of the Union: report of the debate in the House of Commons on Mr Connell's motion…* (1834) p. 3.
55. *Repeal of the Union*, pp. 5–21. Plowden's *State of Ireland* [3.1] was republished in 1831.
56. *Repeal of the Union*, pp. 145–56. *See* N. Gash, *Sir Robert Peel: the life of Sir Robert Peel after 1830* 2nd edn (Longman, 1986) p. 45.
57. W. Cobbett, *Republican judge, or the American liberty of the press…*(1798) in *AJR* 1 (July 1798) pp. 8–17; and *Detection of a conspiracy, formed by the United Irishmen, with the evident intention of aiding the tyrants of France* in *Peter Porcupine in America; pamphlets on republicanism and revolution* ed with an introduction by D. A. Wilson (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1994) pp. 241–57. For Cobbett's Irish reports in the *Political Register* see *Cobbett in Ireland: a warning to England* ed. with an introduction by D. Knight (Lawrence and Wishart, 1984).
58. W. Cobbett, *History of the Protestant Reformation in England and Ireland; showing how that event has impoverished and degraded the main body of the people of those countries* 2 vols (1824–7). Like Paine, Cobbett boasted that only the Bible had exceeded the sales of his history.
59. On Wellington and the 40-shilling freeholders *see* [7.66].
60. *PR* 27 September 1834 in *Cobbett in Ireland*, pp. 49–50. What followed was the fall of Grey's ministry and its replacement by Melbourne's.
61. O'Connell to Dwyer 11 September 1834, *PR* 27 September 1834 in *Cobbett in Ireland* Appendix 3 p. 285.
62. *PR* 17 May 1834 in *Cobbett in Ireland* Appendix 2 p. 281. *See* e.g. *BEM* 18 (July 1825) p. 8 and (Oct. 1825) p. 484.
63. Notably in the series of ten letters 'To Charles Marshall, Labourer' in *PR* 27 September. to 29 November 1834.
64. W. Cobbett, *Manchester lecture…to which is subjoined a letter to Mr O'Connell on his speech made in Dublin, on the 4th of January 1832, against the proposition for establishing of poor-laws in Ireland* (1832) pp. 155–6, 158. O'Connell later claimed that Cobbett's arguments had persuaded him that the poor laws should be applied to Ireland.
65. *PR* 4 October 1834 in *Cobbett in Ireland*, pp. 67, 73.

66. *Pilot* 10 Nov. 1834 in *Cobbett in Ireland*, pp. 187, 191–2.
67. *Pilot* 10 Nov. 1834 in *Cobbett in Ireland*, pp. 192–4.
68. *Pilot* 10 Nov. 1834 in *Cobbett in Ireland*, pp. 201, 205.
69. Speech of 4 February 1836 in *Modern history sourcebook* at http://www.fordham/edu/halsall/mod/1836oconnell.html.
70. Dunlop, p. 311.
71. O'Connell, *Memoir on Ireland: native and Saxon* 2nd edn (London and Dublin, 1869) p. 33.
72. *Memoir on Ireland*, pp. 33–5.
73. *Memoir on Ireland*, p. 39.
74. *Memoir on Ireland*, pp. 40–2. For a powerful Irish attack on tithes *see* J. O'Driscol, *View of Ireland: moral, political religious* 2 vols (1823) i pp. 119–39.
75. *Memoir on Ireland*, pp. 31–2.
76. Dunlop cites all nine propositions, pp. 338–9.
77. Dunlop, p. 346.
78. *Life of Lord John Campbell Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain* ed by his daughter 2 vols (1881) ii p. 186.
79. W. A. O'Connor, *History of the Irish people* 2nd edn (London and Manchester, 1886) p. 279.
80. A. M. Sullivan, *New Ireland* 2 vols (1877) i p. 45. For Sullivan as editor of the *Nation* see Chapters 9 and 10 below.
81. *See* p. 83 of John Mitchel's short biography of Thomas Francis Meagher, published in the *Shamrock* after Meagher's death in 1867; reprinted in ed. M. J. McManus *Thomas Davis and Young Ireland* (Dublin, 1945) pp. 71–104.

9 Violence Re-visited: Young Ireland and '98

1. Printed in R. Montgomery Martin, *England before and after the Union with Great Britain* (1843) p. ii.
2. *Nation* 25 November 1843. *See also* Whelan [1.4] p. 168.
3. *FJ* 22 May 1841.
4. O'Connell [8.71] p. 26.
5. *Nation* 3 December 1842.
6. Daunt [8.52] i p. 111.
7. Daunt, i p. 98.
8. *Nation* 1 July 1843. The Queen and Prince Albert would visit Ireland in 1849.
9. *Nation* 8 July 1843.
10. *Nation* 19 August 1843.
11. *See* F. McManus, 'The greatness of Thomas Davis' in *Thomas Davis and Young Ireland* [8.81] p. 3.
12. Sir Charles Duffy, *Young Ireland, 1840–45* (1880) in Wright [1.93] p. 142. Wright comments that it was 'the effort to revise the legacy of 1798, the notion of a non-sectarian nationalism, for which Young Ireland was to be noted'.
13. F. Gallagher, 'Davis and the modern revolution' in McManus [8.81] p. 12.
14. *100 Irish Ballads* (Dublin, 1981) p. 9. *See also* ballads first appearing in the *Nation* and published as *Spirit of the Nation* (Dublin, 1843).

15. For tributes at his death see *Nation* 20 September 1845. Extracts (with account of funeral) in L. Kellett, *'The Nation* in mourning' in McManus [note 11] pp. 32–7.
16. B. Macnamara, 'Charles Gavan Duffy' in McManus [8.81] p. 39. The first volumes in Duffy 'Library of Ireland' series (his own *Ballad poetry of Ireland* and T. MacNevin's *History of the Volunteers of 1782* went through three editions in as many weeks.
17. Wright [1.93] p. 3.
18. *BNL* 9 June 1846.
19. *BNL* 24 June 1846. On *BNL* see Wright, pp. 144–7. *See also* P. Gibbons, *The origins of Ulster Unionism: the formation of popular Protestant politics and ideology in nineteenth-century Ireland* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1975).
20. *ILN* 12 August 1848.
21. *Times* 2 and 5 August 1848.
22. Wright, p. 136.
23. *Spirit of the Nation* [note 14] pp. 29–31 and 48–50.
24. Madden [8.32] i p. 369.
25. Madden (1842) i p. viii.
26. The 1842 volumes featured Bagenal Beauchamp Harvey, Cornelius Grogan, John Henry Colclough. John and Henry Sheares – all of whom were executed in 1798.
27. Madden (1842) i p. 345.
28. Madden (1842) ii p. 342. On Presbyterian involvement see McBride [1.5] pp. 207–8n, 232–5.
29. Madden (1842) ii p. 343.
30. Madden (1842) i pp. 44–5.
31. Madden (1842) i p. 51.
32. Madden (1842) i p. 66.
33. Madden (1842) i p. 58.
34. *History of the proceedings and debates of the volunteer delegates* p. 13 in Madden (1842) i p. 68. Madden recalls that in 1783: 'Tone was a loyal subject, and Colonel Robert Stewart was chairman of a meeting at which sedition was pretty plainly inculcated, in the example held forth of the successful struggle for American independence'.
35. Madden (1842) i p. 136. Similar declarations and resolutions from the Dublin Society are given in Madden ii pp. 304–8.
36. Madden (1842) i p. 144.
37. Madden (1842) i p. 146.
38. Madden (1842) i p. 168.
39. Madden (1842) i pp. 154–6. His sources are *Life of Theobald Wolfe Tone…* ed. by his son 2 vols (Washington, 1826) and *Memoirs of the examination of O'Connor, Emmet and McNevin before the secret committee of the house of lords* [1798].
40. Madden (1842) i pp. 162–5.
41. Madden (1842) i pp. 147–8.
42. Madden (1842) i pp. 338–41.
43. Martin [note 1] pp. iii–iv; for text of the address *see* pp. iv–ix.
44. Martin, pp. xiv–xv.

45. Martin, p. 329.
46. Martin, p. 385.
47. Martin, pp. 392–4.
48. *GM* 101 (Jan. 1831) p. 78 in *QR* 72 (Sep. 1843) p. 562.
49. *QR* 72 (Sep. 1843) pp. 566–7.
50. *QR* 72 (Sep. 1843) p. 579. For a list of provincial meetings of the 1840s with their estimated attendances *see* pp. 570–1.
51. *QR* 72 (Sep. 1843) p. 583.
52. *Nation* 15 July 1843 in *QR* 72 pp. 586.
53. *QR* 72 (Sep. 1843) pp. 586–9.
54. Mitchel on Meagher [8.81] p. 86.
55. On historiography of the famine *see* C. Toíbín's introduction to C. Toíbín and D. Ferriter, *The Irish famine: a documentary* (Profile books, 2001) pp. 3–36.
56. On workhouse mortality *see* especially Toíbín and Ferriter p. 119.
57. Cited in *Davis and Young Ireland* [8.81] pp. 44–5.
58. J. Mitchel, *Jail Journal: or five years in British prisons etc* (New York, 1854) in Toíbín and Ferriter, pp. 9–10. During the 1799 famine, only the noble cussedness of Cornwallis, stopped the British government from making Ireland export its food stocks to England. (*Castlereagh correspondence* [5.28] ii p. 431).
59. On the Gregory clause *see* J. O'Rourke, *History of the great Irish famine of 1847* (1874): 'A more complete engine for the slaughter and expatriation of a people was never devised'.
60. Trevelyan to Lord Monteagle 9 October 1846 in Toíbín and Ferriter p. 72. *See also* Sir Charles Trevelyan, *Irish crisis… the great Irish famine of 1846–7…* (1848).
61. T. O'Neill, 'Famine evictions' in C. King (ed.) *Famine, land and culture in Ireland* (Dublin, 2000).
62. *The Times* 1 Sep. 1846.
63. J. Mitchel, *The last conquest of Ireland (perhaps)* (Glasgow, 1876). For a concise examination of the agrarian issues *see* K. T. Hoppen, *Ireland since 1800* 2nd edn (Longman, 1999) chs 2 and 3; for myth-making among emigrants *see* P. O'Farrell, 'Whose reality? The Irish famine in history and literature', *Historical Studies* (Australia, 1982–3) 20 pp. 1–13.

10 Gladstone, Fenians and Disestablishment

1. J. Newsinger, *Fenianism in mid-Victorian Britain* (London and Boulder, Colorado: Pluto Press, 1994) pp. 21, 6–8. Mitchel's *History of Ireland from the treaty of Limerick to the present time…* (Glasgow, 1869) compared Clarendon in 1847 with Mountjoy in Elizabeth's reign: 'There was growing upon Irish soil a noble harvest; but it had been more economical to carry it over to England by help of free trade than to burn it on the ground.'
2. R.V. Comerford, *The Fenians in context: Irish politics and society, 1848–82* (Dublin, Wolfhound Press; NJ, Humanities Press both 1985) p. 21.
3. Newsinger, pp. 1–2. Cf Comerford, p. 8: '[The Fenian] movement was not a manifestation of "indefeasible nationality" but rather the product of a

range of social, economic and intellectual-sentimental factors, and of assorted contingencies of personality, place and time.'

4. J. Mitchel [9.58] 1918 edn pp. 377–9. For personal links *see* [10.35, 36].
5. W. E. Gladstone, *The State in its relations with the church* 2 vols 4th edn (Murray, 1841).
6. Gladstone, i p. 1.
7. Gladstone, i p. 26.
8. Gladstone, i p. 24.
9. Gladstone, i pp. 16–17.
10. Gladstone, i p. 145.
11. Gladstone, i p. 272
12. E. R. Norman, *Anti-Catholicism in Victorian England* (Allen and Unwin, 1968) pp. 23–51. The College had been founded with government support in 1795 to deter Irish ordinands from attending foreign seminaries.
13. J. Blackburn, *The Maynooth grant: facts and observations relating to the popish College of St Patrick* (1845) p. 14. For an Anglican protest see *The endowment of Maynooth: a speech of the Rev. William Brock at a public meeting at Yarmouth, April 9* (Norwich, 1845) p. 4.
14. *QR* 76 (June 1845) pp. 247–71. See also *QR* 82 (Dec. 1847) pp. 306–7; and *QR* 83 (Sep. 1848) pp. 599–606 for the effect of enfranchising the 40-shilling freeholder on the priest's status.
15. *QR* 76 (June 1845) p. 248.
16. D. M. Perceval, *Maynooth and the Jew bill – further illustrations of the speech of the Right Honourable Spencer Perceval on the Roman Catholic question* (Edinburgh, 1845) p. 17 in *QR* 76 (June 1845) p. 264.
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26. For full text *see* Norman, pp. 159–61.
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57. *BEM* 98 (Nov. 1865) pp. 518–19. Cf [2.66].
58. *BEM* 99 (Apr. 1866) pp. 489–90.
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64. *See* [5.1].
65. *QR* 124 (Apr. 1868) p. 578. The Queen, though regretting that the matter had been raised, urged the Lords not to reject the Bill. *See* her letters to Derby and to Granville in *Letters* [note 60] i pp. 603–11.
66. *BEM* 102 (Dec. 1867) p. 678.
67. *BEM* 103 (Feb. 1868) p. 223.
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71. I. Butt, *Ireland's appeal for amnesty: a letter to the Right Honourable W. E. Gladstone* (London and Glasgow, 1870) p. 7. For the report of the commissioners appointed to investigate prison conditions at Portland *see* Rafferty [note 32] pp. 120–1, where he calls the Amnesty demonstrations 'without doubt the largest political mobilization of mass popular opinion since the 1840s'.
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73. *See* Comerford's assessment, pp. 178–9.
74. *See* B. Solow, *The land question and the Irish economy* (Harvard, 1871) pp. 19–20; and W. E. Vaughan, *Landlords and tenants in mid-Victorian England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994) p. 100.
75. *Tablet* 22 January 1870.
76. Comerford (pp. 113, 181) thinks papal condemnation was counter-productive. *See also* Rafferty p. 151.
77. J. Morley, *Life of William Ewart Gladstone* 2 vols (1908) ii p. 88.
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79. *See* next chapter.

11 Jubilees, Centenaries and Historians

1. Gladstone's proposed exclusions from the curriculum provoked laughter when announced in the Commons. *See* Jenkins, [10.28] p. 364.
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3. W. E. Gladstone, *The Vatican decrees in their bearing on civil allegiance: a political expostulation* (1874) in Norman [10.12] pp. 213–16.
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5. J. H. Newman, *Letter addressed to His Grace the Duke of Norfolk on the occasion of Mr Gladstone's recent expostulation* (1875) in Norman, p. 223.
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10. *ER* 140 (Apr. 1875) p. 559.
11. J. A. Froude, *The English in Ireland in the eighteenth century* 3 vols 2nd edn (1887) i pp. 5–6.
12. Froude, ii p. 331.
13. Froude, ii pp. 333, 427.
14. Froude, ii p. 355.
15. Froude, iii pp. 1–3.
16. On Lord Moira's speeches see *AJW* 3 (30 Nov. 1797), 4 (4 Dec 1797) and 5 (11 Dec. 1797). Froude, iii pp. 270, 274 describes Lake as 'an officer of singular moderation', and notes drily: 'The disarming of Ulster furnished a ready occasion for parliamentary declamation.'
17. Froude, iii p. 472, quoted in *QR* 136 (Apr. 1874) p. 520.
18. *ER* 138 (Apr. 1874) pp. 468–71.
19. Froude, iii pp. 211–12, 216.
20. Froude, iii p. 338.
21. *ER* 138 (Apr. 1874) p. 574.
22. *QR* 136 (Apr. 1874) p. 499.
23. *QR* 136 (Apr. 1874) p. 508.
24. *QR* 136 (Apr. 1874) pp. 517–19.
25. *The Book of Martyrs of John Foxe revised with notes and an appendix by the Rev. William Bramley-Moore with illustrations* (London and New York, [1879]).
26. *QR* 172 (Jan. 1891) p. 1. The first edition's last three volumes were devoted to Ireland: vol. vii began in 1790. The five-volume Irish section of the 1892 'cabinet' edition was republished separately in 1898 as *A history of Ireland in the eighteenth century*.
27. W. E. Lecky [1.48] iii p. 203.
28. Lecky, iii pp. 235–6.
29. Lecky, iii p. 217.
30. *QR* 172 (Jan. 1891) pp. 2–3. The opening of 1799–1805 Castle records in 1867 enabled Lecky to do for 1798 what Froude had done for 1641. See *ER* 173 (Jan. 1891) pp. 3–4.
31. *QR* 172 (Jan. 1891) p. 11.
32. *QR* 172 (Jan. 1891) pp. 13–32.
33. *ER* 173 (Jan. 1891) p. 30.
34. *ER* 173 (Jan. 1891) pp. 26–7.
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36. A. Roberts, *Salisbury: Victorian Titan* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1999) p. 251.
37. Roberts, p. 379.
38. Roberts, p. 54.
39. Roberts, p. 382.
40. Roberts, p. 384.
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42. *ILN* 90 (25 June 1887). A separate 32-page jubilee number was also published (13 June 1887) with 10 full-page and four half-page illustrations. For scenes of dynamite damage in London *see ILN* 82 (24 March 1883), 84 (7 June 1884), 86 (31 January 1885). For the promised Jubilee plot *see* Campbell, *Fenian Fire…* [10.54] pp. 231–41.
43. *ILN* 110 (19 June 1897) pp. 842, 847. The previous issue (12 June 1897) carried photographs of the premiers of Canada, Natal, Newfoundland, Australia, Queensland, Victoria – and of their wives.
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45. *Nation* 27 June 1896.
46. *Irish Times* in *Nation* 20 June 1896.
47. *Nation* 4 July 1896.
48. *See* especially *Nation* 12 September 1896, quoting 'a grand pantomime' (*Kilkenny Journal*), 'an unrepresentative and utterly unauthoritative gathering' (*Munster News*) and 'the Leinster Hall burlesque' (*Irish Daily Independent)*.
49. *Nation* 23 January 1897.
50. *BNL* 7 January 1897.
51. *Nation* 1 May 1897. The same issue announced a solemn requiem mass in St Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh on 12 May when 'the panegyric of O'Connell will be preached by the Very Revd Dr Keane, O.P.'
52. *BNL* 17 February 1897.
53. *Nation* 8 May 1897.
54. *BNL* 4 June 1898.
55. *BNL* 6 June 1898.
56. *BNL* 7 June 1898.
57. *BNL* 8 June 1898.
58. *BNL* 11 June 1898.
59. *FJ* 29 March 1898.
60. *WN* 18 June 1898. The *Weekly Nation* (the re-named *Nation*) first appeared on 10 June 1897, following the first appearance of the *Daily Nation* on 5 June.
61. *WN* 25 June 1898.
62. *Nation* 15 May 1897. P. F. K. was presumably Rev. Patrick Kavanagh of the Ancient Order of Hibernians whose *Popular history of the insurrection of 1798* (1870) was reissued in 1898 [note 64]. *See* K. Whelan, 'Politics of memory' [10.48]
63. *Nation* 29 May 1897.
64. *QR* 187 (Jan. 1898) on e.g. W. H. Maxwell, *History of the Irish rebellion* new edn (1894); Rev. P. F. Kavanagh, *Popular History of the insurrection of 1798* new edn (Dublin, 1898).

65. *QR* 187 (Jan. 1898) pp. 31–2.
66. *QR* 187 (Jan. 1898) pp. 34–5.
67. *QR* 187 (Jan. 1898) pp. 36–7.
68. *QR* 187 (Jan. 1898) pp. 42–3.
69. *QR* 187 (Jan. 1898) p. 49.
70. *QR* 187 (Jan, 1898) p. 60.
71. T. W. Russell, *Ireland and the Empire: a review 1800–1900* (London and New York, 1901). *See also* H. Butler, 'Anglo-Irish Twilight' in his *Escape from the Anthill* (Gigginstown, Co Meath, 1986) paperback edn pp. 83–4: as 'the Kilkenny Militia in their red tunics, spiked helmets and snow-white bandoliers, set off a thousand strong, to embark at Waterford for training on Salisbury Plain', they were pursued by a mob shouting 'Hurrah for Kruger and Lady Desart!'
72. *ILN* 14, 21, 28 April; 5 May 1900. For her 1849 visit with Prince Albert see *ER* 93 (Jan. 1851) pp. 23–40 and *ILN* 4, 11, 18 August 1849 with an additional special supplement on 11 August; also *Letters* [10.60] i p. 576 for her 1869 preference, on any future visit, 'for making herself acquainted with the fine scenery of Ireland, and with the character of its peasantry…without being pressed to make public entrances into any large towns or to hold receptions'.
73. T. D. Ingram, *Critical examination of Irish history. Being a replacement of the false by the true from the Elizabethan conquest to the legislative union of 1800* 2 vols (London, Dublin and New York, 1900) i pp. 1, 12–14.
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76. Ingram, ii pp. 74–8.
77. Ingram, ii p. 80.
78. Knox, *Political essays* [note 67–8] p. 42 in Ingram, i p. 217.
79. *Rebellions* [1.4] Dublin edn i p. 108 in Ingram ii p. 184; *see also* Ingram ii pp. 125n, 126n. Cf *Rebellions* in [2.41].

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